Safety survey data from Victorian youth-serving organisations

Survey data from workers, young people, and organisational leaders' self-reflections after implementing the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Douglas Russell

Daryl Higgins

Jacqui Stewart

Acknowledgements

Suggested citation

About ICPS

The Institute of Child Protection Studies (ICPS) enhances outcomes for children, young people and families through quality research, program evaluation, training and community education, advocacy and policy development. We are nationally recognised for our expertise in child protection and preventing and responding to the abuse and neglect of children. We promote children's participation, strengthen service systems, inform practice and support child-safe communities.

See: www.acu.edu.au/icps

ICPS manages the ACU Safeguarding Children and Young People Portal. The Portal provides a central pathway to the range of ACU research projects, professional development opportunities, and capacity-building tools that aim to support institutions to better safeguard children and young people from sexual abuse and other forms of harm. Child safety is a priority for everyone, everywhere – from parents to parishioners, sporting clubs to dance classes. And at Australian Catholic University (ACU), we are committed to supporting and enabling the safety of children and young people in families, communities and organisations. ACU offers a range of services, courses and professional development programs to help individuals and organisations understand and apply child-safe and child-friendly practices and policies.

See: https://safeguardingchildren.acu.edu.au/

Glossary

ASK-YP	Australian Safe Kids and Young People survey (Moore, McArthur, Heerde, Roche, & O'Leary, 2016), which forms part of the Children's Safety Survey
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
Category 1	Organisations that are regulated and/or funded by government departments
Category 2	Organisations that have limited or no funding from government and no regulatory arrangements with government.
Children's Safety Survey	An empirical survey tool developed by researchers at ICPS encompassing the Australian Safe Kids and Young People (ASK-YP) survey developed for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Child Health Utility 9D measure (a measure of paediatric quality of life) and the Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire (a measure of child wellbeing).
DHHS	The Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services.
ICPS	Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University.
Participation coordinator	An individual within a youth-serving organisation responsible for managing and distributing either the Safeguarding Capabilities or Child Safety surveys in their organisation.
Reflections Survey	A survey developed in conjunction with DHHS staff to measure an organisations implementation of the Standards.
Safeguarding Capabilities Survey	The Safeguarding Capabilities Survey in Preventing Child Sexual Abuse (Russell & Higgins, 2019). A measure of workforce capability to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse in youth-serving organisations.
Staff	Staff, workers and volunteers aged 16 and over who are employed by or volunteer at a youth-serving organisation
The Standards	The Victorian Child Safe Standards
Youth-serving organisation	An organisation who provides services to children, young people and/or their families.

Contents

1. Executive summary

1.1. BACKGROUND

The Victorian Child Safe Standards (the Standards) incorporate seven standards and three overarching principles. Each standard addresses a specific element of child safety within an organisation. Creating a child safe organisation requires an organisation to ensure all the standards and principles are applied and operate together. The Standards apply to all organisations that provide services or facilities for children.

In 2018, the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) commissioned the Australian Catholic University's Institute of Child Protection Studies (ICPS) to collect data to support their review of the Standards.

ICPS invited organisations directly using suggestions provided by peak bodies and national and state associations. Invitations, registrations, consent and participation were conducted online with both young people, paid staff and volunteers.

ICPS collected data using empirical surveys from its Children's Safety Studies and a third survey, named the Reflections Survey. Table 1 outlines the purpose of the surveys and Table 2 shows participants. (For more information see full report sections 5 and 6 respectively.)

Table 1. Survey descriptions

Survey	Description
Children's Safety Survey	Measures children and young people's perceptions of safety within an organisation
Safeguarding Capabilities in Preventing Child Sexual Abuse (Safeguarding Capabilities) Survey	Measures staff and volunteers' capabilities in preventing and responding to safeguarding concerns
Reflections Survey	Measures organisational leaders' perceptions of the child-safe culture within their organisation, and the extent to which the Standards have supported or enabled child safeguarding in their organisation

Table 2. Participants

12 organisations		
Category 1 (5 organisations) • 4 schools (School 1, 2, 3 and 4) • 1 out-of-home care[1]	Sector (cross-section)	Category 2 (7 organisations) • 3 sport (Sport 1, 2 and 3) • 1 outside school hours care • 1 faith-based • 2 youth (Youth Organisation 1 and 2)
4	9 Reflections (organisation leaders)	5
239	645 staff (including volunteers)	406
238	334 young people (aged 10-18)[2]	96
Conducted online February and April 2018 Parental consent given for all participants aged under 15		

---

[1] The Out-of-Home Care Provider was unable to include children and young people in the Children's Safety Survey due to issues of consent, creating a limitation to the conclusions that can be drawn.

[2] Responses from young people need to be seen in the context of their age. In Category 1 young people were predominantly in the older age range (15-18 years), and in Category 2 young people were predominantly in the younger age range (10-14).

1.2. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Organisations are taking steps to ensure young people in their care feel safe and are safe, in keeping with the intent of the Standards. It is difficult to say that one organisation or sector is doing better than another due to the scope of this project, which had a relatively small and non-representative sample. The one area where it was apparent that all organisations required extra support was in the participation and empowerment of children. Further insights and observations are provided below under each Standard.

STANDARD 1 – STRATEGIES TO EMBED AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF CHILD SAFETY, INCLUDING THROUGH EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

Staff appeared to have confidence in their leaders' understanding of child safeguarding and the priority their organisation placed on protecting young people from child sexual abuse. School-based staff expressed more confidence in leadership and the priority given to safeguarding child safety than their peers in out-of-home care and the Category 2 organisations.

High staff confidence seemed related to leaders' reports that their organisations have the policy, procedures and systems in place to help embed a culture of child safety. Even so, just under half of the leaders felt there was room for improvement. Leaders aspired to deliver more education on safeguarding both for staff and top tier management.

STANDARD 2 – A CHILD-SAFE POLICY OR STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

There was little consistency in staff views across sectors on whether child-safe policies, procedures and practices were readily available and regularly reviewed. Staff at only two schools expressed confidence that regular reviews were conducted. Staff in Category 2 organisations were more likely to indicate that policies, procedures and practices were not regularly reviewed.

In contrast, all leaders expressed confidence that their organisation had adopted a child-safe policy and had implemented a review processes with some referring to ongoing internal reviews. The leaders provided examples of in-progress reviews to ensure their policies were comprehensive.

STANDARD 3 – A CODE OF CONDUCT THAT ESTABLISHES CLEAR EXPECTATIONS FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR WITH CHILDREN

Staff across most organisations agreed that their organisation had a code of conduct that defines how adults should interact with young people. The one exception was a sporting organisation (Sport 2 – see Table 8 in the main report). Even though the leader at this organisation indicated a code of conduct existed, staff did not always agree that a code was in place. The tiered nature of this organisation may have contributed to lower levels of agreement because some clubs may have a code of conduct, and others may not.

Most leaders expressed high levels of confidence in the application of the code of conduct at their organisation. The leader at one youth organisation (Youth Organisation 2) identified the need to integrate multiple codes. The leader of a faith-based organisation observed that adoption of the code still presented an ongoing challenge because, after examining the survey results, the leader lacked confidence that staff were strictly applying the code.

STANDARD 4 – SCREENING, SUPERVISION, TRAINING AND OTHER HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES THAT REDUCE THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE BY NEW AND EXISTING PERSONNEL

Staff responses indicated that organisations provide better training than they do supervision. This finding suggests that staff are receiving initial training, but it may not be followed up with routine supervision and other practices designed to reduce the risk of child abuse.

Staff who felt that there were not enough training opportunities were also more likely to feel that there was inadequate supervision.

Organisational leaders presented a different view from staff. They all said that adequate screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices were in place.

STANDARD 5 – PROCESSES FOR RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Staff were clear about their mandatory reporting requirements.

Staff, particularly in Category 1 organisations, mostly agreed that their organisation provided timely responses and support to young people at risk of abuse or who have experienced abuse. Yet they had low levels of confidence in their own capacity to support these young people. These findings might suggest that staff see themselves as separate from the organisation's response to disclosures of abuse.

Young people in Category 2 organisations were more confident than their peers in schools that adults in their organisation knew what to do or say when an adult made them feel unsafe. Yet young people from all organisations were less likely to feel that an adult knew how to respond if a peer had made them feel unsafe.

Most organisational leaders were satisfied with the processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. But two leaders expressed concern. The leader at the faith-based organisation wanted better reporting and investigation of child-safety related misconduct. This same leader and the leader of a youth organisation (Youth Organisation 2) wanted more support in place for young people and staff who reported/responded to suspected child abuse.

STANDARD 6 – STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE OR REMOVE RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE

Staff appeared to have confidence in identifying risk factors related to perpetrator behaviour. They were less confident in identifying the characteristics of young people that make them more vulnerable to sexual abuse. This finding suggests staff only have part of the knowledge and awareness needed to address risks of child abuse.

Most leaders commented on the need for ongoing work to realise Standard 6. Their comments suggested that while risk mitigation strategies were in place more work was needed to raise awareness of these strategies and assess their effectiveness.

STANDARD 7 – STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE THE PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF CHILDREN

Staff at an out-of-home care provider, two sporting organisations (Sport 1 and 3) and a faith-based organisation mostly agreed or strongly agreed that their organisation valued the opinions of young people. Staff at schools were less likely to indicate their organisation valued the opinions of children.

Staff across all organisations did not appear confident about their own capacity to include perspectives of young people in addressing and preventing the risk of sexual abuse. Given that staff expressed some confidence in their organisation's inclusion of young people, it seems that staff see themselves as separate from the organisation's response to child participation and empowerment.

Young people in all organisations indicated that they felt adults value their views and opinions some of the time or all of the time. However, young people at schools did not feel their views were valued as much as their peers in most of the other organisations. The exception is the faith-based organisation where young people were more likely to express uncertainty on whether their opinions were valued.

Leaders expressed varying perspectives on their organisation's progress toward child participation and empowerment. Around half of the respondents described participation and empowerment strategies as a work in progress. These respondents indicated that a specialist skill set was required and were seeking external or building in-house expertise. Leaders from two schools revealed high confidence in all aspects of their organisation's approach to child participation and empowerment. Given staff at schools did not share this confidence it may mean that more work is needed in schools to involve staff in child participation and empowerment strategies.

1.3. VIEWS ON CHILD SAFETY

Leaders and young people were asked their views of the child-safety culture in their organisation. The average self-rating of leaders was 7 out of 10. Leaders at the schools rated their child-safety culture as 8 or higher. Young people in schools were not as confident as leaders in the culture of child safety in their organisation.

Young people at schools scored the safety climate lower in their organisation compared with their peers in Category 2 organisations. For example, young people in schools ranked the safety climate with an average score ranging from 1.10 to 1.69, and young people in Category 2 organisations ranked the safety climate with an average score ranging from 1.62 to 1.89 (4 = highest possible score). It appears that young people in schools are less confident in the culture of child safety than their peers at other organisations.

1.4. PRINCIPLES

Staff across organisations agreed that their institutions promoted positive attitudes towards children from different ages, genders, abilities, faiths, sexualities and ethnic or cultural backgrounds. Yet staff reported they were not confident in their own ability to look out for the sexual health and safety of children from diverse backgrounds.

There is only limited data from young people of diverse backgrounds. The number of participating Aboriginal young people was too small to draw any conclusions for this group, and young people with disabilities did not participate. The number of participating culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) young people was significant enough to draw conclusions about their perceptions of safety.

CALD young people expressed two disparate responses. While on the one hand CALD young people generally felt safe, they had a poorer view of their organisation's culture of child safety. CALD young people did not rate the culture of child safety in their organisation as highly as their non-CALD peers. These finding suggests that while CALD young people feel safe it is not necessarily because the different conditions of safety exist within their organisation.

Leaders expressed different views on whether the Principles had helped create safe environments for young people from diverse backgrounds. Around half of the respondents agreed the Principles were helpful. The others were unsure or disagreed that the Principles had translated into greater support for young people from diverse backgrounds.

1.5. CONCLUSIONS

Staff and leaders across all organisations held similarly positive attitudes towards child safety – they felt strongly that it needs to be a high priority. There is scope to improve staff knowledge of policy and to engage staff in reviews.

Further staff training and engagement might be needed. Not all staff were confident in their own ability to address children and young people's concerns. Staff may need specific tools and strategies that can help them embed child safety in their day-to-day practice.

Staff do not appear to see themselves as part of the organisational response to disclosures of abuse – they appear to see themselves as separate from the organisational and systemic tools that are in place. While their role in mandatory reporting is clear, their confidence to support young people is low. Further training and practice tools may provide staff with the confidence to support children who feel at risk.

Another area in which staff may lack confidence is in their capacity to support the safety of Aboriginal young people, young people from CALD backgrounds, and young people with a disability. Staff agreed that they needed additional/specific support to promote their safety.

All organisations across all sectors felt that they needed to include children more in creating a child-safe environment. Further efforts in child participation and empowerment are important because young peoples' perception of safety is related to their wellbeing and quality of life.

2. Introduction

In 2015, the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) introduced the Victorian Child Safe Standards (the Standards). The aim was to promote the safety of children and young people by supporting the way in which organisations, their workforce (staff and volunteers) and members work so that protecting children and young people is always considered, taken seriously and acted upon. These Standards became fully operational in 2017. In 2019 DHHS began a review of the extent to which the Standards promote improvements in the child-safe culture, and the extent to which the regulatory scheme supports compliance by organisations.

As part of the review, DHHS commissioned the Australian Catholic University's Institute of Child Protection Studies (ICPS) to undertake surveys of staff, children, young people and leaders in a variety of youth-serving organisations. This report describes each survey in detail, presents an analysis of the participants, and describes the methodology. We It also presents our findings, addressing each standard individually, with a summary of overall findings related to the Standards as an overall regulatory framework for driving a culture of child-safety within all youth serving organisations across Victoria.

3. Background

3.1. THE VICTORIAN CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Every child and young person have the right to feel and be safe. To help keep children and young people safe, the Victorian Government introduced the Child Safe Standards (the Standards) for organisations that provide services or facilities for children and/or young people. The Standards are a compulsory framework that supports organisations to promote the safety of children and young people. It requires organisations to implement policies to prevent, respond to and report allegations of child abuse in all its forms including physical, sexual, emotional and psychological and neglect. The Standards are designed to drive cultural change in organisations by enabling them to place child safety at the core of what they do.

The Standards are a response to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations (2013). The inquiry's final report, *Betrayal of Trust,* recommended the creation of mandatory Child Safe Standards. The Victorian Government acted on this recommendation by developing the Standards. The Standards were introduced on 26 November 2015 when the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015, which amended the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005.*

There are seven standards and three overarching principles. Each standard addresses a specific element of child safety within an organisation. Creating a child safe organisation requires an organisation to ensure all the standards and principles are applied and operate together. Table 3 details the standards and overarching principles.

Table 3. The Victorian Child Safe Standards and Principles

Standards	
Standard 1	Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
Standard 2	A child-safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
Standard 3	A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
Standard 4	Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
Standard 5	Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
Standard 6	Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Standard 7	Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children
Principles	
Principle 1	Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
Principle 2	Promoting the cultural safety of children from CALD backgrounds
Principle 3	Promoting the safety of children with a disability

Sources: https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards and https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childsafestandards.aspx

The Standards apply to all organisations that provide services or facilities for children and young people. Organisations are typically required to comply with the Standards if they:

- provide any services specifically for children and young people
- provide any facilities specifically for children and young people who are under the organisation's supervisor, or
- engage a child or young person as a contractor, employee or volunteer to assist the organisation in providing services or products.

The obligation and timing to comply was phased. Organisations fall into two categories. These are:

- Category 1 – organisations regulated and/or funded by government departments;
- Category 2 – organisations that have limited or no funding from government and no regulatory arrangements with government.

Category 1 organisations were required to start applying the Standards by 1 January 2016. Category 2 organisations by 1 January 2017.

See: https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/the-child-safe-standards/who-do-the-standards-apply-to/

3.2. REVIEW OF THE STANDARDS

In November 2018, DHHS released an Issues Paper, *Review of Victoria's Child Safe Standards*, outlining a review of the Standards. The review was designed to assess whether the Victorian Child Safe Standards have been understood and implemented by organisations in their initial period of operation in a way that promotes improvements in the child-safe culture in organisations. It is also assessed whether the regulatory scheme that supports compliance with the Standards is operating effectively.

The key questions informing the review are as follows:

1. To what extent are all in-scope organisations complying with the Standards?
2. To what extent have the Child Safe Standards enabled in-scope organisations to implement practices that ensure children from diverse backgrounds are kept safe
3. To what extent are the roles and functions of relevant authorities clearly and appropriately defined in relation to the Child Safe Standards and are they empowered to fulfil their functions under the legislation?
4. To what extent are the elements of the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations addressed by the Victorian Standards?

Question 4 acknowledges significant child safety initiatives at the national level. The Commonwealth Royal Commission collected further evidence of the sexual abuse of children in organisational settings. Handing down its final report in December 2017, the Commonwealth Royal Commission recommended that, across Australia, all organisations working with children should implement child-safe standards. The Commonwealth Royal Commission proposed a set of draft standards. Following broad national consultation on the proposed standards, the National Children's Commissioner produced a further set of standards, described as the *National Statement of Principles for Child Safe Organisations* (the National Principles). The Council of Australian Governments endorsed the National Principles in February 2019. Part of the DHHS review is reflecting on whether the Standards align with the recommendations of the Commonwealth Royal Commission.

The review entailed a range of data collection activities. Stakeholders (organisations and their staff and volunteers, peak associations, relevant authorities and regulators, and members of the community who work with children and young people or have children) were invited to read the Issues Paper and participate in an online survey. A review team collected written responses to the Issues Paper from individuals and organisations. ICPS submitted a written response. The DHHS organised roundtable discussions. The Department also commissioned ICPS to deploy empirical surveys investigating young people's perceptions of safety, adults' capabilities to safeguard young people, and a reflections survey from organisational leaders deploying the survey in their organisations. The Department of Health and Human Services Engage website survey also provided an Issues paper that individuals and organisations were invited to respond to. Views from organisations associated with services for children and their families, including peak bodies, government organisations, regulators and children and young people themselves were sought. Specifically, respondents were asked to provide feedback on the following:

- organisations' experiences with implementing Victoria's Child Safe Standards
- the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Standards, including views on whether the Standards are helping to develop a child-safe culture in organisations
- any features of a high-quality regulatory oversight, monitoring and enforcement framework that are not currently captured in Victoria's *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic)
- the Royal Commission's recommended child safe standards as incorporated into the National Principles.

From: Issues paper: ISBN 978-1-76069-706-8 (pdf/online/MS word). Available at Engage Victoria https://engage.vic.gov.au/

The review entailed other data collection activities too. DHHS supplemented responses to the Issues Paper with targeted focus groups with stakeholders in youth-serving organisations. Further, DHHS commissioned the Institute of Child Protection Studies (ICPS) to deploy empirical surveys investigating young people's perceptions of safety and adults' capabilities to safeguard children.

3.3. INSTITUTE OF CHILD PROTECTION STUDIES

ICPS enhances outcomes for children, young people and families through quality research, program evaluation, training and community education, advocacy and policy development. The Institute is recognised for its expertise in child protection and preventing and responding to the abuse and neglect of children. ICPS promote children's participation, strengthen service systems, inform practice and support child-safe communities.

DHHS approached ICPS about using empirical surveys from its Children's Safety Studies to collect data to support the review of the Standards. The surveys (described below) are psychometrically tested for reliability and validity. One of them incorporates survey questions used to collect data for reports commissioned by the Commonwealth Royal Commission. Accordingly, ICPS prepared a proposal outlining how it could deploy the surveys in keeping with DHHS requirements to reach certain stakeholder groups.

ICPS CHILDREN'S SAFETY STUDIES

The Children's Safety Studies at ICPS entails ongoing research into children and young people's perceptions of safety in institutional settings and adults' capabilities to safeguard children in their paid or voluntary work with youth-serving organisations. The methodology for the study was originally developed to inform the Commonwealth Royal Commission's work in assessing the effectiveness of current prevention programs by directly hearing children and young people's views and knowledge of safety issues, as well as how they think these issues can and should be addressed.

ICPS' Children's Safety Studies utilises two complementary surveys:

- The Children's Safety Survey (incorporating the Australian Safe Kids and Young People Survey)
- The Safeguarding Capabilities in Preventing Child Sexual Abuse (Safeguarding Capabilities) Survey

Children's Safety Survey

The Children's Safety Survey measures children and young people's perceptions of safety within youth-serving organisations. Organisations self-administer the survey to children and young people in their programs to help assess their organisation's safety climate. The survey results afford participating organisations the opportunity to consider and respond to the views of children and young people when making decisions about how to improve safeguarding and protective policies and procedures.

The Children's Safety Survey incorporates questions from the Australian Safe Kids and Young People (ASK-YP) Survey. In 2014-15, the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse commissioned ACU to develop and deploy the ASK-YP Survey, which was based on a child-centred co-design methodology. For more detail, see Taking Us Seriously (Moore, McArthur, Noble-Carr, & Harcourt, 2015). In 2015, over 1,400 young people from four types of organisations (schools, churches, camps and sports groups) completed the survey. Information and findings of the deployment of the ASK-YP Survey can be found in the Our Safety Counts report (Moore, McArthur, Heerde, Roche, & O'Leary, 2016) on the ACU Safeguarding Children and Young People Portal. See: https://safeguardingchildren.acu.edu.au

Following the Commonwealth Royal Commission project, ICPS continued working on the ASK-YP survey. New measures related to child health, wellbeing and quality of life were incorporated into the survey. New animated scenarios (with dialogue and captions) were developed. The scenarios present uncomfortable hypothetical child-to-adult and peer-to-peer interactions. After reading a scenario, children and young people answer questions about their confidence in adults to keep them safe. Simulating hypothetical events is an effective means of discovering how participants might react to those events and learn their attitudes, values and perceptions (Hughes & Huby, 2002). ICPS also developed real-time dashboards that provide data visualisation to organisations deploying the survey. Considering these revisions and enhancements, ICPS named the revised and enhanced survey the Children's Safety Survey.

ICPS piloted the Children's Safety Survey in 2018. One hundred and sixty-four children and young people completed the survey over 3 months. Findings suggested that children and young people felt safe most of the time in the youth-serving organisation they participated in. However, their feelings of safety and confidence in adults varied depending on the type or nature of services that the organisation provided (e.g., education versus residential care). These variations were also present in the findings of questions regarding barriers that prevented them from seeking help.

Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

The Safeguarding Capabilities in Preventing Child Sexual Abuse (Safeguarding Capabilities) Survey (Russell & Higgins, 2019) measures staff and volunteers' capabilities in preventing and responding to safeguarding concerns. ICPS began development of the survey in 2018. ICPS worked with an international expert panel to review the constructs and items developed, and then proceeded to test the validity and reliability of the survey.

The empirical survey measures four over-arching areas of capabilities. If present these capabilities can support the conditions of safety required to keep children and young people safe from potential sexual abuse. The capabilities are:

1. organisational climate and awareness of policy and procedures
2. confidence to act
3. attitudes to prevention and agency of children and young people
4. situational prevention knowledge and education.

The Safeguarding Capabilities Survey is self-administered.

It features a data visualisation component that enables organisations to view the results real-time.

Organisations can use the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey to support improvements to the conditions of safety within their services and locations. Reflecting upon the results enables organisations to identify changes to policy and procedures designed to improve the conditions of safety for children and young people.

The four factors identified by Russell and Higgins (2019) that the adult Safeguarding Capabilities Survey measures are detailed in Table 4.

Table 4. Factors measured in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Factor	Description
Organisational culture and awareness of policy and procedures	These questions relate to staff and volunteers' awareness of the safeguarding policies, procedures and practices that they are expected to follow in an effort to safeguard children and young people. Ranging from policies that affect them directly, to expectations of leadership to help create an organisational culture of safety, these questions not only help identify strengths and gaps in worker awareness but also encourage reflection about the design and delivery of policies within an organisation.
Confidence to act	These questions relate to confidence to act or self-efficacy of workers. The questions in this factor assess the degree to which staff and volunteers feel confident to implement safeguarding strategies such as: providing support for children and young people to keep themselves safe, approaching colleagues and other adults when they feel someone has not followed a child-safe policy, or where a child or young person may be—or feel—unsafe, and responding to and supporting young people if something was to happen.
Attitudes to prevention and agency of children and young people	These questions relate to workers' attitudes towards activities needed to support prevention of child sexual abuse and their sense of personal responsibility for prevention activities. It focuses on the workers' role in prevention as well as that of children and young people themselves and the role of others, including parents and governments. It measures workers' attitudes towards supporting children's agency and the empowerment of children and young people.
Situational prevention knowledge and education	The final group of questions address staff and volunteers' knowledge of situational prevention strategies (i.e. how to modify environmental factors to reduce opportunities for grooming and abuse to occur), and the education of children and young people and the staff who work with them to support the prevention of grooming and sexual abuse.

As well as being a reliable research measure of safeguarding capabilities, youth-serving organisations can deploy the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey to better understand the capability of their workforce to fulfill legal and moral obligations to protect children and young people from institutional child sexual abuse – such as the Victorian Child Safe Standards. With recent efforts to upskill current professionals as well as the need to prepare future workers in youth-serving organisations, a dual-purpose research measure that can guide quality assurance processes while also collecting data for empirical work, has the potential to improve the lives and wellbeing of children and young people who interact with such organisations around the globe.

4. Incorporation of the ACU surveys into the review

DHHS engaged ICPS to deploy the Children's Safety Survey to children and the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey to staff within organisations to which the Child Safe Standards apply. The aim of using the Children's Safety Survey was to measure young people's perceptions of safety in organisations, including whether their views on child safety are sought and considered by those organisations. The aim of using the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey was to measure the capabilities, behaviours and attitudes of staff in relation to safeguarding children in the organisations.

During the planning stage, DHHS and ICPS recognised the need for a third survey, named the Reflections Survey. The Reflections Survey was developed by ICPS in collaboration with staff from Regulation Reform – Health and Human Services Regulation, Health Protection and Emergency Management Division in the DHHS. Its purpose was to prompt organisations to reflect on their data from the Children's Safety and Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys. Organisations were asked to consider what the data revealed about their compliance with the Standards and the three associated principles and whether seeing that data helped them to identify anything they could do to improve the child safety culture of their organisation.

This data collection exercise contributes information, relating to key evaluation questions, that would best identify potential areas of cultural change. DHHS and ICPS mapped findings from the three surveys (the Children's Safety Survey, the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey and the Reflections Survey) to identify those areas of cultural change for the purposes of the review (see Table 5).

Table 5. Key evaluation questions, sub-evaluation questions and links to Children's Safety and Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys

Key evaluation question	Sub evaluation question	Is the Children's Safety Survey addressing this question?	Is the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey addressing this question?	Is the reflections survey addressing this question?
Q1. To what extent are the elements of the Commonwealth Royal Commission's and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations addressed by Victoria's Standards?	Q1A What are the differences and similarities (gaps and overlap)?	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Q1B What would be required to achieve harmonisation between these child safeguarding frameworks?	N/A	N/A	N/A
Q2. To what extent are all in-scope organisations complying with the Standards?	Q2A Are all in-scope organisations complying with the Standards? What variation is there in compliance levels across the 12 sectors and the 2 categories of in-scope organisations?	Yes - Standard 7	Yes, Standards 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6	Yes
	Q2B If in-scope organisations have not implemented the Standards, what are the reasons for this?	No	Yes	Yes
	Q2C For organisations and/or sectors that have strong compliance - what has enabled this to occur?	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Q2D To what extent are the Child Safe Standards driving cultural change to make organisations more child safe?	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Q2E To what extent have the Child Safe Standards assisted organisations to identify the risks of child abuse in organisations?	Feeds into Reflections	Feeds into Reflections	Yes
	Q2F To what extent have the Child Safe Standards assisted organisations to respond to the risks of child abuse in organisations?	Feeds into Reflections	Feeds into Reflections	Yes
Q3. To what extent have the Child Safe Standards enabled in-scope organisations to implement practices that ensure children from diverse backgrounds are kept safe?	Do organisations feel more confident in promoting the safety of children with disabilities? What practices have they implemented to do this?	No	Yes	Yes
	Do organisations feel more confident in promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children? What practices have they implemented to do this?	No	Yes	Yes
	Do organisations feel more confident in promoting the cultural safety of CALD children? What practices have they implemented to do this?	No	Yes	Yes
Q4. To what extent are the roles and functions of relevant authorities clearly and appropriately defined in relation to the Child Safe Standards	Q4A Is the role and function of the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) clearly and appropriately defined in relation to the Child Safe Standards? If it is not, what needs to be different?	N/A	N/A	N/A

Key evaluation question	Sub evaluation question	Is the Children's Safety Survey addressing this question?	Is the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey addressing this question?	Is the reflections survey addressing this question?
and are they empowered to fulfil their functions under the legislation?	Q4B Is the CCYP suitably empowered to fulfil its functions under the legislation? If it is not, what needs to be different?	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Q4C Are the roles and functions of other relevant authorities clearly and appropriately defined in relation to the Child Safe Standards? If not, what needs to be changed to make them clearer?	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Q4D Are the other relevant authorities suitably empowered to fulfil their functions under the legislation? If they are not, what needs to be different?	N/A	N/A	N/A

4.1. TIMELINE OF PROJECT

The research project had five main stages: planning, recruitment, set up, data collection, analysis and reporting. The timeframes of each stage are summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Stages of the DHHS Review of the Standards Project

5. Method

5.1. MEASURES

THE CHILDREN'S SAFETY SURVEY

The Children's Safety Survey collects demographics and data on children and young people's perceptions of safety within youth-serving organisations in which they interact with adults and peers, their health-related quality of life and their wellbeing. See Table 6 for more information.

Table 6. Data captured by Children's Safety Survey

Theme	Description
Demographics	Children and young people were asked to provide information on several demographic variables: age, gender, postcode for home address, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, and language spoken at home.
Australian Safe Kids and Young People (ASK-YP) scales	
Child-Informed Organisational Safety Climate (CIOSC)	Participants' perceptions of the culture of safety within the organisation were measured using seven items prefaced with the question: 'How true are the following statements for [participant's organisation]?' Examples of items: • Adults care about children and young people • Children and young people have at least one adult who they trust. Items were scored on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 representing 'I'm not sure' and 4 representing 'All of the time'. Participant responses were examined across scale scores as percentages.
Confidence in Adults (CiA)	Participants' confidence in adults within their organisation were measured using seven items prefaced with the question: 'Based on this scenario, how strongly do you agree or disagree with these statements for [organisation name]?' Examples of items: • Adults at [organisation name] would know what to do if I told them I was unsafe • Adults at [organisation name] would probably not believe me • I would know what to do because we've talked about it at [organisation name]'. Items were scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing 'Strongly disagree' and 5 representing 'Strongly agree'.

Theme	Description
Barriers to Help Seeking (BtHS)	Participants' perceptions to barriers that prevent them seeking help were measured using seven items prefaced with the question: 'If you were in a situation like this, there might be a number of things that kept you from getting help. How strongly do you agree with the following statements?' Examples of items: • Adults at [organisation name] are too busy to deal with things like this • I would feel uncomfortable talking to an adult at [organisation name] about things like this. Items were measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing 'Strongly agree' and 5 representing 'Strongly disagree'.
Wellbeing scales	
CHU9D	The Child Health Utility 9 Dimension (CHU9D) is a measure of health-related quality of life for children and young people (Stevens, 2009, 2010, 2011). Participants respond, on a 5-point scale, to 9 questions asking about daily life such as 'I don't feel worried today' (5) to 'I feel very worried today' (1). Higher scores represent a better quality of life.
Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)	The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire is a widely used empirical measure of children's wellbeing (Goodman, 1997). The scale has 25 items measuring 5 sub-scales including emotional problems, conduct problems, hyperactivity, peer problems and prosocial behaviour. The sum of the first four sub-scales creates an overarching 'Difficulties score'. Response are given to statements such as 'I usually do as I am told' and 'I am kind to younger children' on a 3-point scale of 'Not True', 'Somewhat True' and 'Certainly True'. Five items are reverse scored before summing responses.

Participants were also presented with one of two scenarios presenting an uncomfortable hypothetical child-to-adult interaction, and one of two scenarios presenting an uncomfortable hypothetical peer-to-peer interaction. The gender of the student (male or female) depicted in the scenario was randomly assigned. Scenarios matched the context of the interactions in organisations (i.e., the survey administrator selected scenarios related to either school, sports organisations or other youth-serving organisations as appropriate).

The scenarios depict only male adults and male peers engaging in potentially grooming behaviour or behaving in a potentially abusive manner. This is consistent with existing data on perpetrator behaviours, recognising that men and boys are more likely than women and girls to abuse children and young people, or engage in sexual peer violence (Peter, 2008). An example scenario is:

> *Sally is in the school play and rehearses after school. Her teacher tells her that she is very talented and seems really encouraging. But Sally sometimes feels a bit uncomfortable with her teacher – he always singles Sally out for special attention and encouragement. He's a nice guy and everyone likes him. But Sally is uncomfortable because sometimes her teacher stands really close to her and compliments her in ways that makes her feel weird. Sally's teacher has started arranging one-on-one rehearsals with Sally where Sally has to practice the romantic scenes with him saying things like 'I love you'. Sally's teacher says these rehearsals are important to be ready for the performance.*

SAFEGUARDING CAPABILITIES SURVEY

The Safeguarding Capabilities Survey (Russell & Higgins, 2019) is a new tool to measure the capability of workers to implement and support effective child-safeguarding policies and practices. The survey measured four unique factors related to the capabilities of workers in youth-serving organisations. See Table 7 for more information.

Table 7. Capabilities measured in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Capability	Description
Organisational culture and awareness of policy and procedures	Awareness of the safeguarding policies, procedures and practices that they are expected to follow to safeguard children and young people. Ranging from policies that affect them directly, to expectations of leadership to help create an organisational culture of safety.
Confidence to act	The degree to which staff and volunteers feel confident to implement safeguarding strategies such as: providing support, approaching colleagues, and responding to and supporting young people if something were to happen.
Attitudes to prevention and agency of children and young people	Workers' attitudes towards activities needed to support prevention of child sexual abuse and their sense of personal responsibility for prevention activities.
Situational prevention knowledge and education	Staff and volunteers' knowledge of situational prevention strategies (i.e., how to modify environmental factors to reduce opportunities for grooming and abuse to occur), and the education of children and young people.

The Safeguarding Capabilities Survey presents questions with a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree and the three middle options are not labelled.

REFLECTIONS SURVEY

The Reflections Survey sought to understand organisational leaders' perceptions of the child-safe culture within their organisation, and how the Standards have supported or could be changed to better support efforts in this area.

The Reflections Survey has 14 questions, with a range of response formats, including; Likert scale response formats from 1 – 10 ('Not at all child-safe' to 'Extremely child-safe'), open text responses (e.g., What do you think your organisation needs to do to improve its child-safe culture?), multichoice questions and 5-point Likert scale questions (Strongly disagree to Strongly agree). Respondents answer some open text questions in a general, overarching way and others with an individual response for each Standard. The survey is included in Appendix 1.

A link to the online Reflections Survey was sent to a self-appointed leader within each organisation at the end of an agreed data collection period for the two child-safe surveys (i.e., Children's Safety and Safeguarding Capabilities surveys). Respondents were requested to define a child safe culture and rate their organisation's child-safe culture from 1 to 10, reflect upon the survey results to which they may have viewed prior to giving the initial rating, and then rate their organisation again, after having reflected upon their child-safe journey with the Standards.

5.2. ETHICS AND OTHER APPROVALS

This study was conducted with the approval of the Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee (2018-222H and 2018-5H). ICPS sought additional ethical approval when required.

Some organisations required approval from relevant governing bodies within their own organisation structure, or from the relevant Victorian Government department. One organisation that provided out-of-home care services was able to participate using the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey but was not able to deploy the Children's Safety Survey, as necessary legal authorisations were not able to be provided within the project timelines.

5.3. RECRUITMENT

The recruitment strategy was designed ensured a wide range of young people and staff and volunteers could be invited to participate across Category 1 and Category 2 organisations. It was not the intention of this study to recruit state-wide representative samples.

This project used a convenience sampling approach. Organisations were contacted directly and through the suggestion of peak bodies and national or state associations. They were invited to participate and help recruit young people and staff and volunteers. At least one organisation from across the variety of sectors that work directly with young people was invited to participate.

The youth-serving organisations needed to work with and for large numbers of young people. These organisations included schools, non-government organisations, sports organisations, out-of-home care organisations, faith-based youth organisations, youth development organisations, after-school hours care, youth mental health service providers, youth justice facilities and disability service providers.

Organisations consented to participate and conduct the surveys with young people and staff and volunteers by filling in an online registration form, available via Qualtrics. The Qualtrics platform allowed researchers to provide correspondence and support to organisations, as well as tailor the scenarios in the Children's Safety Survey to each participating organisation's sector and context.

REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR ORGANISATIONS

During registration process to deploy the surveys, organisations provided details of one or more participation coordinators. Participation coordinators were responsible for providing information about the organisation's services and locations and distributing survey links to (a) young people; and (b) staff and volunteers. Participation coordinators also completed a final registration form in which they provided details of the specific service or level (such as year groups in a school) for which they were responsible.

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

Participating organisations were provided with communication templates to support recruitment for both surveys. Allowing organisations to utilise their normal communication tools, participation coordinators were able to insert the relevant tailored links to surveys to ensure data collected from participants was related back to their organisation and in some cases, specific services or locations. Organisations whose participation rates were not as high as expected were provided with visual flyers with embedded links to promote the survey among staff and volunteers for the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey, and to parents for the Children's Safety Survey.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT

For the Children's Safety Survey, parental consent was required for all participants aged under 15. An online survey requested parental consent of participants aged under 15 after which the parent could give an email address to have the survey link sent to for the participant to proceed to survey questions.

Participants aged over 15 did not require parental consent for the Children's Safety Survey unless it was requested by the participating organisation. For both the Children's Safety and the Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys, all participants were asked to provide their own informed consent at the start of the survey and to acknowledge an understanding that they could stop the survey at any time, as well as not answer questions if they did not want to.

Despite it not being an Ethics requirement for children aged 15 and over, most organisations elected to still seek parental consent for the participation of all young people.

5.4. SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

All three online surveys were delivered using the online survey platform Qualtrics (see: https://www.qualtrics.com/au/research-core/survey-software/). Each of the surveys took about 20 minutes to complete. Participation was voluntary, and participants were requested to complete their respective surveys without interacting with others. For the Children's Safety Survey, this information was also provided to parents (of children under 15) and participants in the information letters presented at the start of the surveys.

The surveys included instructions on how to answer the questions. Participants could choose which questions to answer and which to skip, and could stop at any time, without penalty. This allowed participants to manage their responses throughout their participation. All participants who completed the survey were given information on accessing either youth-centred support or other assistance if they were feeling distressed or upset after completing the survey.

Surveys were deployed from early February 2019 to mid-April 2019.

5.5. ANALYSIS

TREATMENT OF MISSING DATA

The survey completion rates were calculated based on the number of completed surveys as a percentage of the invitations distributed. Completion rates were as follows:

- Children's Safety Survey: 77.5%
- Safeguarding Capabilities Survey: 77.5%
- Reflections Survey: 66%

Data from the Children's Safety and Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys were excluded from analyses where participants: (1) responded to the invitation to participate in the survey with the response 'No, I don't want to be involved'; (2) were outside the specified age range for participation; or (3) provided responses only to demographic items.

Of the 432 young people who clicked through to the survey, 12 did not consent, and 43 were not within the correct age range. After removing these data, of those who agreed to participate in the Children's Safety Survey and who were in the correct age range, 42 (11%) were excluded due to not responding to any of the ASK-YP survey items, and one outlier was removed. This left 334 participants to be included in the analyses.

Of the 821 staff and volunteers who agreed to participate in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey, 164 (20%) were excluded due to only answering demographic items. Once 10 outliers were removed through data screening, 647 participants for the analyses of data for this survey.

Nine of the twelve organisations who took part in the Children's Safety Survey and/or Safeguarding Capabilities Survey had a staff member complete (in full or in part) the Reflections Survey. Data from one respondent was excluded from analysis. This respondent only completed the first few questions in the Reflections Survey.

STATISTICAL ANALYSES

Data analysis of the results from the Children's Safety and Safeguarding Capabilities Survey was performed with the SPSS version 25 for Windows program (IBM, 2017).

Using percentages, we examined responses to the Children's Safety Survey items eliciting young people's views on: (a) perceptions of the child-safe climate; (b) confidence in adults to respond appropriately when they feel unsafe; and (c) barriers to them seeking help in youth-serving organisations. Participant responses were examined across scale scores as percentages, for the full sample, and where applicable, by organisation.

The mean scores of participants' perceptions across the three subscales (five times due to two scales being asked twice, once when considering an adult-based scenario and once for a peer-based scenario) were compared using Kruskal-Wallis analysis of variance tests. Bivariate tests of difference were run to investigate differences between responses by participants across each of the twelve organisations.

The same analyses were used for the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey to identify trends through descriptive data in the form of percentages and to identify differences in mean scores for the four unique factors across the twelve organisations.

Power analyses

A priori power analyses were conducted using G*Power (version 3.1.9.2) to determine the required sample size for predetermined effect size (Eta squared) and error in probability levels for the conduct of the following sets of analyses: ANOVA Fixed effects, omnibus, one-way. Based on a moderate effect size of .20 and $p < .05$ error in probability, a sample of 448 was required. This sample would provide sufficient (80%) power for proposed analyses across the Children's Safety Survey and Safeguarding Capabilities Survey to detect meaningful, statistically significant differences.

Greater participation rates would have increased the power to detect any significant differences in the analyses we conducted. For instance, differences between participants in different groups (i.e., CALD children and their peers). This implication is discussed further in the limitations section (see page 60).

ANALYSIS OF REFLECTIONS SURVEY

The key evaluation questions and findings from the Children's Safety and Safeguarding Capabilities Survey represented the points of focus for the analysis of the Reflections Survey. We sought insights from the Reflections Survey on the extent to which organisations were complying with the Standards. Where appropriate, we also sought reflections that either supported or contradicted the findings from the Children's Safety and Safeguarding Capabilities Survey results. The observations garnered from the Reflections Survey are not intended as a representative view. Instead they speak to the child safeguarding experience of a small number of organisational leaders that may or may not accurately reflect the experience of other youth-serving organisations.

6. Participation

6.1. ORGANISATIONS

Organisations which took part in the study came from a range of sectors, reflecting both Category 1 and 2 organisations. Table 8 outlines the nature of the different organisations and which type of youth-serving sector they represent.

Table 8. Organisational type and sector for the 12 participating organisations from Category 1 and Category 2

Category 1 (Government funded/regulated organisations)

Organisation	*Sector*
School 1 (Prep – Year 12)	Education
School 2 (Year 7 – 12)	Education
School 3 (Year 7 – 12)	Education
School 4 (Year 7 – 12)	Education
Out-of-home Care (OOHC) Provider	Child welfare

Category 2 (limited or no funding from government and no regulatory arrangements with government)

Organisation	*Sector*
Sport 1 (Individual sport)	Sport
Sport 2 (Team sport)	Sport
Sport 3 (Individual sport with an Aboriginal-specific service)	Sport
After Hours School Care (AHSC)	Children's services
Faith-based Organisation	Religious development
Youth Organisation 1 (Youth personal development organisation)	Youth development
Youth Organisation 2 (Not-for-profit offering youth services, community recreation and before and after school care)	Youth development

6.2. PARTICIPANTS

For the Children's Safety Survey, participants were included in the study if they were aged between 10 and 18 years of age at the time of data collection. Young people were invited by the participating organisations. See Table 9 for a breakdown of child/youth respondents by age (in years) and gender (male; female; non-binary) across the 12 participating organisations.

Table 9. Participant age and gender of child/youth respondents by organisational type and sector

		Age (years)																		Total		Non-binary	Overall
		10		11		12		13		14		15		16		17		18					
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	-	-
Category 1	School 1								1	1	1	1									2	2	1	
	School 2					2						2		22	24	5	12		1	31	37	4	
	School 3												2	23	19	15	13	4	2	42	36	1	
	School 4				1					1	1	17	15	9	7	18	8	2		47	32	3	
	OOHC*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	--	-	-
Category 2	Sport 1	1				2									1	1				4	1		
	Sport 2	4		4		2		3		3		1	1							17	1		
	Sport 3								1											0	1		
	AHSC	2	1			2														4	1	1	
	Faith-based Org			1		1		1					1	1				1	1	5	2		
	Youth Org 1		7		11		9		9		8		3		4		3		1	0	55		
	Youth Org 2	1		1		1										1				4	0		
	Total (n)																			156	168	10	334

Source: Children's Safety Survey

*No information is available for OOHC because they did not collect data using the Children's Safety Survey.

For the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey, participants were eligible to take part if they were aged 16 or over and worked in a paid or volunteer position for the organisations taking part in the study. Participants did not need to work directly with children to take part in the study. Staff and volunteers were invited by their organisations to take part by means of standard communication procedures in each organisation (e.g., email). See Table 10 for a breakdown of participants by position type.

Table 10. Number of Adult worker/volunteer respondent job role by organisational type and sector

		Practitioner	Administration	Middle Management	Organisational Leader	Missing	Total
Category 1	School 1	26	10	8	7	0	51
	School 2	25	4	13	5	0	47
	School 3	12	0	3	1	0	16
	School 4	29	9	17	4	0	59
	Out-of-home Care Provider	47	2	15	1	1	66
Category 2	Sport 1	5	0	3	2	1	10
	Sport 2	18	6	15	18	3	60
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	0	2	3	3	0	8
	After Hours School Care	14	0	0	1	0	15
	Faith-based Organisation	15	7	7	8	1	38
	Youth Organisation 1	162	20	23	14	9	228
	Youth Organisation 2	27	1	9	7	3	47
	Totals	380	61	116	71	18	645

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

The Reflections Survey was completed by one staff member per organisation. He or she identified themselves in the following role in each organisation (see Table 11).

Table 11. Job role of respondents to the Reflections Survey by organisational type and sector

	Organisation	Role of participant
Category 1	School 1	Vice Principal
	School 2	Director of Student Services
	School 3	Leading Teacher: Wellbeing
	School 4	No response
	Out-of-home care provider	Director of Policy and Research
Category 2	Sport 1	General Manager (only answered the first few questions)
	Sport 2	Club and Competitions Specialist
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	No response
	After Hours School Care	No response
	Faith-based Organisation	Senior Policy Advisor
	Youth Organisation 1	CEO
	Youth Organisation 2	Executive Manager

Source: Reflections Survey

7. Findings from the surveys

The findings section presents results from the Reflections, Children's Safety and Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys. It begins with data about organisational leaders' feelings towards their organisation's child-safe culture, obtained from the Reflections Survey. The section then presents staff and volunteers' capabilities across the four factors of the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey. Each of the seven Child Safe Standards are considered next. Data from the Reflections and Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys are presented under each Standard, as relevant. Findings of the Children's Safety Survey are presented under Standard 7 only, as the data from this survey most closely reflects the achievement of the standard in terms of children having their voice heard. Following the sub-sections on each standard is a discussion of findings related to the three overarching principles. The section concludes with a summary section of overall findings across the three surveys.

Select survey items from within each of the four factors of the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey were identified where they help illustrate implementation of a standard. These questions have been highlighted in the tables throughout the findings and at times compared with each other to highlight where patterns of positive practice, inconsistencies or organisation-to-organisation comparisons were relevant to the evaluation questions of the DHHS review of the Standards.

7.1. VIEWS ON CHILD SAFETY WITHIN THE ORGANISATIONS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS

The Reflections Survey asked respondents to rate their organisations child-safe culture twice. Initially respondents were asked to explain what it means for an organisation to have a child-safe culture and, considering this definition, rate the performance of their organisation (questions 1 and 2). Toward the end of the survey respondents were asked to rate their organisation again considering the survey results (question 11). We do not know the extent to which the child-safe survey results influenced one or both ratings. Respondents may have looked at the child-safe survey results before starting the Reflections Survey. Alternatively, they may have commenced the Reflections Survey and checked the child-safe survey results when asked to comment on what the results revealed about their organisations implementation of the Standards.

Overall, respondents rated their organisation's child safety highly. On a scale from 1 – 10, the average self-rating was 7 (see Table 12). Most organisations reported the same self-rating for questions 2 and 11. The small number of respondents (n = 9), and the distinct possibility that most organisations viewed the results and immediately completed the Reflections Survey potentially explains this result. As shown in Table 12, only Sport 2 changed their rating from 6 to 7 in the course of completing the Reflections Survey.

Table 12. Organisational ratings of child-safety

	Organisation	Q2. Thinking about your idea of what it means for an organisation to have a child-safe culture, how do you think your organisation rates?	Q11. Now that you have fully reflected on your organisation's survey results … rate your organisation again in terms of how child-safe you believe it is …
Category 1	School 1	9	9
	School 2	8	8
	School 3	10	10
	School 4	No response	No response
	Out-of-home Care Provider	8	8
Category 2	Sport 1	10	No response[3]
	Sport 2	6	7
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	No response	No response
	After Hours School Care	No response	No response
	Faith-based Organisation	5	5
	Youth Organisation 1	8	8
	Youth Organisation 2	7	7

Source: Reflections Survey

---

[3] As noted, the respondent from Sport 1 only completed part of the Reflections Survey (i.e., 3 questions out of a possible 14).

Respondents with moderate to high ratings (6 and above) attributed their rating to three factors. A consistent view of respondents was that they had the systems in place to support child safety. For instance, a respondent revealed: '*we have strong processes and policies for the safety of our students*' (School 3). Five respondents credited their rating to strong levels of staff awareness. '*There [are] a lot of people making great efforts to ensure child safety is something that is a part of our everyday work*' (Sport 2). Two respondents (Youth organisation 1 and OOHC) identified efforts to improve the participation of children as the reason for their relatively high self-ratings of child safety.

Seven of the eight respondents acknowledged the need for ongoing efforts to strengthen or maintain their child-safety related performance. They identified different areas for action including further staff education, system reviews and improved child participation.

The Faith-based Organisation rated child-safe culture at 5. They identified '*clear structural and resources issues that impact the effective implementation of child safety*'.

Overall, the Reflections Survey revealed that respondents felt the Standards had helped the organisation address child safety. Two respondents appreciated that the Standards helped them identify key policies, systems and practices for the organisation to implement. '*The Standards have provided an overarching framework of outputs we need to achieve to provide a safe environment for children and young people*' (Sport 2). Three respondents reported that the Standards helped affirm their existing efforts and raise the profile and priority placed on child safety.

> *Further reinforcement of our existing accreditation program, recommendations from the Royal Commission, and the National Principles. Elevating the Standards to legislation in Victoria has assisted in prioritising child safety within the organisation (Youth Organisation 2)*

> *[The Standards] ensured a focus and attention on child safety (School 1)*

> *Coupled with the work of the Royal Commission … the Standards have raised the awareness of child safety and created a new focus on the obligation to protect children (OOHC)*

The Reflections Survey identified two distinct views on whether the Standards support cultural change. The central issue is whether culture change is occurring as a result. For example, one respondent felt the Standards supported cultural change. Another respondent however felt the Standards supported a compliance mentality as opposed to a focus on building the capacity of organisations to deliver internal cultural change.

> *The Standards have been invaluable in supporting our organisation to develop a child-safe culture by providing guidance and indicators around a wide range of things that we need to factor in in [sic] the development of a child-safe environment. Standard 1 and Standard 7, in particular, are like the 'book-ends' within which the Standards sit comfortably and have consequently enabled us to see the importance of long-term cultural change rather than simply the development of a series of policies (School 2)*

> *The Standards have provided an overarching framework of outputs … more needs to be done to further develop this culture (Sport 2)*

Four respondents to the Reflections survey identified areas where they felt the Standards had not supported their safeguarding practice. Three of these respondents indicated that the Standards did not support the development of child-safe policies and procedures or encourage child participation (see Table 13).

*Table 13. Organisations reflection on areas where the Standards have **NOT** supported their child-safeguarding efforts*

	Organisation:	Identifying risks of abuse	Responding to claims of abuse	Identifying training needs and implementing HR …	Developing child-safe polices	Recognising and responding to diversity	Embedding child safety	Encouraging child participation
Category 1	School 1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	School 2					x		
	School 3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	School 4	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Out-of-home Care	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Category 2	Sport 1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Sport 2	x			x	x		x
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	After Hours School Care	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Faith-based Organisation		x		x	x		x
	Youth Organisation 1	x	x	x	x		x	x
	Youth Organisation 2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

7.2. STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS' CAPABILITIES ACROSS THE FOUR FACTORS OF THE SAFEGUARDING CAPABILITIES SURVEY

Below are the means and standard deviations for the four factors in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey (see Table 14) across each of the 12 youth-serving organisations where data collection occurred.

To test for differences in findings of the factors within the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey between organisations, an analysis of variance was conducted (Kruskal-Wallis) with appropriate post-hoc tests. Significant differences between organisations were apparent across all four factors. Where significant differences were found in the bivariate (organisation-to-organisation) analyses these are discussed below each factor.

FACTOR 1: ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND AWARENESS OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

These questions relate to staff and volunteers' awareness of the safeguarding policies, procedures and practices that they are expected to follow in an effort to safeguard children and young people. Ranging from policies that affect them directly, to expectations of leadership to help create an organisational culture of safety, these questions not only help identify strengths (and gaps) in staff awareness but also encourage reflection about the design and delivery of policies within an organisation.

Table 14. Factor 1: Organisational culture and awareness: Mean & standard deviation (SD)

	Organisation	*N*	Mean	SD
Category 1	School 1	51	4.14	.43
	School 2	48	4.13	.42
	School 3	16	3.71	.50
	School 4	60	4.21	.45
	Out-of-home care provider	66	4.03	.60
Category 2	Sport 1	10	3.62	.75
	Sport 2	60	3.47	.77
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	8	4.15	.60
	After Hours School Care	15	3.94	.54
	Faith-based Organisation	38	3.97	.78
	Youth Organisation 1	228	4.01	.58
	Youth Organisation 2	47	4.33	.46

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

When comparing the different organisations' mean scores for the awareness factor, Sport 2 scored significantly lower than the faith-based organisation, youth organisations 1 and 2, OOHC, and schools 1, 2 and 4.

School 3 and Youth Organisation 1 were both found to be significantly lower than Youth Organisation 2 on this factor.

FACTOR 2: CONFIDENCE TO ACT

The questions relating to confidence to act (or "self-efficacy") of workers assess the degree to which staff and volunteers feel confident to implement safeguarding strategies such as: providing support for children and young people to keep themselves safe, approaching colleagues and other adults when they feel someone hasn't followed a child-safe policy, or where a child/young person may be—or feel—unsafe, and responding to and supporting young people if something was to happen (see Table 15).

Table 15. Factor 2: Confidence to act (Mean and SD)

	Organisation	*N*	Mean	SD
Category 1	School 1	51	3.90	.67
	School 2	48	4.00	.50
	School 3	16	3.62	.66
	School 4	60	4.04	.61
	Out-of-home care provider	66	4.20	.52
Category 2	Sport 1	10	3.71	.56
	Sport 2	60	3.59	.65
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	8	4.01	.65
	After Hours School Care	15	3.90	.66
	Faith-based Organisation	38	3.96	.64
	Youth Organisation 1	228	3.97	.60
	Youth Organisation 2	47	4.29	.57

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Sport 2 was once again found to have a statistically significantly lower mean rank than Youth Organisation 1 and 2, OOHC and School 4. Youth Organisation 1 was also found to be significantly lower than Youth Organisation 2 in this factor.

School 3 was also significantly lower in this factor than Youth Organisation 2.

FACTOR 3: ATTITUDES TO PREVENTION AND AGENCY OF CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

These questions relate to workers' attitudes towards activities needed to support prevention of child sexual abuse and their sense of personal responsibility for prevention activities. It focuses on the staff's role in prevention as well as that of children and young people themselves and the role of others including parents and the government. It measures workers' attitudes towards supporting children's agency and the empowerment of children and young people (see Table 16).

Table 16. Factor 3: Attitudes to prevention & agency of children (Mean & SD)

	Organisation	*N*	Mean	SD
Category 1	School 1	51	4.42	.37
	School 2	48	4.34	.36
	School 3	16	4.29	.39
	School 4	60	4.27	.42
	Out-of-home care provider	66	4.49	.40
Category 2	Sport 1	10	4.55	.26
	Sport 2	60	4.22	.49
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	8	4.21	.19
	After Hours School Care	15	4.20	.66
	Faith-based Organisation	38	4.37	.33
	Youth Organisation 1	228	4.32	.46
	Youth Organisation 2	47	4.31	.55

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

The only significant difference for this factor was that adults in OOHC had significantly more positive attitudes to prevention actions and agency of children than workers in Sport 2.

FACTOR 4: SITUATIONAL PREVENTION KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION

The final group of questions address staff and volunteers' knowledge of situational prevention strategies (i.e., how to modify environmental factors to reduce opportunities for grooming and/or sexual abuse to occur), and the education of children/young people and the staff who work with them to support the prevention of grooming and sexual abuse (see Table 17).

Table 17. Factor 4: Situational prevention knowledge and education (mean; SD)

	Organisation	*N*	Mean	SD
Category 1	School 1	51	3.93	.47
	School 2	48	4.10	.43
	School 3	16	3.68	.46
	School 4	60	4.03	.56
	Out-of-home Care Provider	66	4.14	.51
Category 2	Sport 1	10	4.15	.56
	Sport 2	60	4.03	.51
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	8	3.60	.54
	After Hours School Care	15	4.24	.53
	Faith-based Organisation	38	4.18	.56
	Youth Organisation 1	228	4.07	.50
	Youth Organisation 2	47	4.25	.54

Source: Safeguarding Capability survey

School 3 scored significantly lower than Youth Organisation 2 and the Faith-based Organisation on the knowledge factor.

7.3. FINDINGS RELEVANT TO SPECIFIC STANDARDS

The following section of results details select survey item responses, chosen across the Safeguarding Capabilities and Children's Safety Surveys, as well as themes and findings from the Reflections Survey, which highlight the perspectives from an organisation's workforce, its young people, and reflections from its organisational leaders as to whether the organisation is meeting that standard.

STANDARD 1: STRATEGIES TO EMBED AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF CHILD SAFETY, INCLUDING THROUGH EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Staff appear to have confidence in their leaders. They disagred with the negatively phrased statement relating to their leaders' understanding of the importance of safeguarding (see Table 18). (The questions in Table 18 are from the organisational culture and awareness factor.) This opinion was more apparent in schools than Category 2 organisations. Staff at schools also rated their organisation as having stronger cultures of child safety than Category 2 organisations.

Table 18. Item responses related to Standard 1

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "The leaders in my organisation do **not** understand the importance of safeguarding children and young people from sexual abuse."					
School 1	78.4%	11.8%			
School 2	77.1%	18.8%	2.1%		
School 3	50.0%	12.5%	6.3%	12.5%	
School 4	63.3%	21.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
Out-of-home Care Provider	66.7%	15.2%	4.5%	4.5%	
Sport 1	40.0%	20.0%		20.0%	10.0%
Sport 2	51.7%	21.7%	10.0%	6.7%	
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	87.5%	12.5%			
After Hours School Care	46.7%	46.7%			
Faith-based Organisation	71.1%	10.5%	2.6%		5.3%
Youth Organisation 1	67.5%	18.0%	5.3%	0.9%	2.2%
Youth Organisation 2	83.0%	2.1%	4.3%		2.1%
Survey item: "My workplace has a culture that prioritises the protection of children and young people from sexual abuse.'					
School 1	2.0%	3.9%	7.8%	17.6%	58.8%
School 2			4.2%	29.2%	64.6%
School 3		6.3%	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%
School 4			3.3%	33.3%	55.0%
Out-of-home Care Provider	3.0%		6.1%	30.3%	54.5%
Sport 1			10.0%	20.0%	60.0%
Sport 2	5.0%	8.3%	25.0%	23.3%	35.0%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)			12.5%		87.5%
After Hours School Care			26.7%	26.7%	33.3%
Faith-based Organisation	2.6%		13.2%	23.7%	52.6%
Youth Organisation 1		1.3%	8.8%	27.2%	54.8%
Youth Organisation 2		2.1%	4.3%	14.9%	76.6%

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Reflections Survey

A consistent view of respondents to the Reflection Survey was that policy, procedures and systems had enabled them to embed an organisational culture of child safety. Examples that leaders provided included implementing codes of conduct, risk management processes, and staff education.

Three respondents to the Reflections Survey signalled a need for improvements in the implementation of Standard 1. Two respondents reported a need for further education. Sport 2 reported a need for further child-safe awareness training for all staff. Youth Organisation 2 wanted further training on child-safety at the senior management, executive and governance levels of the organisation. One of these respondents (Youth Organisation 2) indicated that efforts to improve child participation in child-safety related activities was required to help implement Standard 1. The other respondent (faith-based organisation) acknowledged lots of work had been done to raise the profile and priority placed on child safeguarding but felt that there is not an '*overall acceptance … of the need to implement a comprehensive range of strategies to keep children and young people safe*'.

STANDARD 2: A CHILD-SAFE POLICY OR STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Findings from the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey relating to Standard 2 come from the organisational culture and awareness of policies and procedures factor. Although youth-serving organisations may have policies (such as Codes of Conduct; see Standard 3), there is wide variability in staffs views regarding the regular review of these, across different organisation types. Even within sectors (i.e., education), some staff feel policies are reviewed more regularly compared to staff in other organisations. Such variability is also apparent in staff's views regarding the availability of policies and procedures both to themselves as well as parents. Staff in Category 2 organisations are more likely to disagree that policies and procedures are being reviewed regularly, with staff in sports organisations being most likely to disagree. See Table 19 for percentages of responses related to agreement to the statements related to Standard 2.

Table 19. Item responses related to Standard 2

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "My organisation regularly reviews child-safe policies, procedures, and practices to manage risks of abuse."					
School 1			7.8%	25.5%	58.8%
School 2			2.1%	31.3%	64.6%
School 3		6.3%	25.0%	37.5%	25.0%
School 4			11.7%	16.7%	58.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider	3.0%	7.6%	12.1%	27.3%	42.4%
Sport 1	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	50.0%	10.0%
Sport 2	11.7%	15.0%	30.0%	21.7%	16.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)		12.5%	12.5%	12.5%	62.5%
After Hours School Care		13.3%	26.7%	13.3%	33.3%
Faith-based Organisation		5.3%	15.8%	28.9%	39.5%
Youth Organisation 1	0.9%	1.8%	14.0%	35.1%	43.9%
Youth Organisation 2			14.9%	10.6%	66.0%
Survey item: "Our organisation's child-safe policies and procedures are readily/always available to clients, staff and volunteers."					
School 1			9.8%	15.7%	64.7%
School 2			8.3%	35.4%	54.2%
School 3		6.3%	6.3%	25.0%	50.0%
School 4			5.0%	26.7%	60.0%
Out-of-home Care Provider		6.1%	12.1%	36.4%	42.4%
Sport 1		10.0%	10.0%	40.0%	30.0%
Sport 2	6.7%	11.7%	25.0%	21.7%	26.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	12.5%	12.5%		37.5%	37.5%
After Hours School Care			6.7%	53.3%	33.3%
Faith-based Organisation	2.6%	2.6%	7.9%	18.4%	60.5%
Youth Organisation 1		6.1%	12.1%	36.4%	42.4%
Youth Organisation 2				19.1%	72.3%

Source: Safeguarding Capability survey

Reflections Survey

All respondents to the Reflection survey indicated that their organisation had adopted a child-safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety. As one respondent explained: '*I believe our organisation has sound practice in setting, reviewing and promoting our safeguarding commitment and policy. This was strongly evidenced through the survey results*' (Youth Organisation 2). One respondent was in the process of re-developing a more comprehensive policy (Faith-based Organisation).

For one respondent (Out-of-home Care Provider), Standard 2 was about more than a policy or statement of commitment. They attributed their realisation of Standard 2 to supporting processes and practices like staff training and providing support to children at risk of or experiencing abuse and acknowledged the need to ensure these processes and practices were regularly reviewed and refined.

STANDARD 3: A CODE OF CONDUCT THAT ESTABLISHES CLEAR EXPECTATIONS FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR WITH CHILDREN

Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Responses related to Standard 3 also come from the organisational culture and awareness of policy and procedure factor of the survey. There is little variance between organisations' staff's views regarding their organisation having a code of conduct. The one exception, with a much lower score, is Sport 2. This organisation is a state peak body where data were collected across six areas and multiple clubs. The tiered nature of the organisation may be the cause of the lower agreement due to either some clubs not having a code of conduct, or confusion as to at what level a code of conduct should be apparent.

In organisations where staff are unclear of the existence of a code of conduct, expectations regarding behaviour of staff were found to be less clear. There was a larger variance in responses to the expectations of staff behaviour, leaving questions as to whether staff had not understood their organisation's code of conduct, whether their organisation's code of conduct did not clearly express expectations regarding behaviour related to child safety, or whether staff felt the code of conduct was not the sum of understanding regarding expectations of behaviour, and other constructs affect staff understanding of behavioural expectations. Table 20 shows the percentage of each response given across different organisations.

Table 20. Item responses related to Standard 3

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "My organisation has a code of conduct that defines how adults should interact with children and young people."					
School 1			2.0%	21.6%	66.7%
School 2			8.3%	27.1%	64.6%
School 3		6.3%	6.3%	18.8%	56.3%
School 4			3.3%	21.7%	68.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider		1.5%	4.5%	24.2%	63.6%
Sport 1				30.0%	70.0%
Sport 2	5.0%	6.7%	16.7%	31.7%	31.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)			12.5%	25.0%	62.5%
After Hours School Care		6.7%		13.3%	66.7%
Faith-based Organisation	5.3%	7.9%	7.9%	15.8%	52.6%
Youth Organisation 1	.4%	1.8%	4.8%	20.2%	66.7%
Youth Organisation 2			2.1%	17.0%	70.2%
Survey item: "My organisation's expectations regarding appropriate and inappropriate behaviour of adults towards children and young people are **unclear**."					
School 1	70.6%	21.6%	2.0%		
School 2	64.6%	22.9%	4.2%	6.3%	2.1%
School 3	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%		
School 4	61.7%	25.0%	3.3%	3.3%	1.7%
Out-of-home Care Provider	66.7%	21.2%	3.0%	1.5%	3.0%
Sport 1	50.0%	20.0%	10.0%	10.0%	
Sport 2	31.7%	33.3%	13.3%	8.3%	5.0%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	50.0%	37.5%	12.5%		
After Hours School Care	46.7%	20.0%	6.7%		
Faith-based Organisation	60.5%	18.4%	5.3%	5.3%	
Youth organisation 1	57.9%	23.7%	6.6%	4.4%	3.1%
Youth Organisation 2	72.3%	17.0%	2.1%		2.1%

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Reflections Survey

Reflection Survey responses about the implementation of Standard 3 revealed that most respondents had high levels of confidence in the application of the code of conduct at their organisations. '*The Code is being used to support leadership behaviour and address conduct when needed*' (Youth Organisation 1). '*A child-safe code of conduct is well embedded at our organisation*' (Youth Organisation 2).

One respondent (Youth Organisation 2) reflected on need to streamline codes within their organisation. It appeared that different centres had developed their own code. The respondent was keen for the multiple codes to be integrated and condensed.

Another respondent (Faith-based Organisation) wondered about the workforce's implementation of the code. After reflecting on the survey results they indicated '*it is concerning that 60% of the sample felt it was important to consider a colleague's intentions than consider the code of conduct*' (Faith-based Organisation).

STANDARD 4: SCREENING, SUPERVISION, TRAINING OR OTHER HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES THAT REDUCE THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE BY NEW AND EXISTING PERSONNEL

Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Findings related to Standard 4 relate to staff attitudes and organisational culture and awareness of policy and procedures. Responses across the three questions identified below (see Table 21) show large variance in relation to training, supervision and HR practices (i.e. working with children checks). Staff responses indicate that organisations provide better training than they do supervision (such as the day-to-day practice of asking staff about safety concerns) across all organisations. These findings suggest that staff perceive organisations to be giving initial training but not following up with routine processes to ensure children's safety.

Organisations where staff have poorer perceptions of training regarding safeguarding training, also identified poorer perceptions than other organisations regarding supervisory practices. Figure 2 demonstrates how issues concerning Standard 4 are not purely theoretical and how the observance of a change in culture of child safety within an organisation must move beyond simple awareness of procedures at the practitioner level to supervision and HR practices that should have child safety embedded in day-to-day practice.

Across the 12 organisations, the proportion of staff who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that working with children checks are the only way to prevent child sexual abuse ranged from 10% (Sport 1) through to 31.9% (Youth Organisation 2). Internal education to staff regarding the weaknesses of relying on working with children checks with reference to developing a culture of child safety would support uptake of day-to-day practices which do support positive culture change. The variation between organisations suggests that more work can be done to promote the message that child safety shouldn't rely solely on pre-employment screening (Higgins, 2017). See also: https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/pre-employment-screening-working-children-checks-and-police-checks

Table 21. Item responses related to Standard 4

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "My organisation provides sufficient training about sexual abuse that can be experienced by children and young people."					
School 1		2.0%	11.8%	54.9%	21.6%
School 2		2.1%	14.6%	43.8%	35.4%
School 3		12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	6.3%
School 4	1.7%	3.3%	10.0%	43.3%	30.0%
Out-of-home Care Provider	9.1%	19.7%	24.2%	19.7%	19.7%
Sport 1	30.0%	20.0%	10.0%	20.0%	10.0%
Sport 2	13.3%	30.0%	28.3%	13.3%	6.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)		12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	25.0%
After Hours School Care		26.7%	33.3%	13.3%	13.3%
Faith-based Organisation	2.6%	13.2%	28.9%	18.4%	26.3%
Youth Organisation 1	3.1%	8.3%	26.3%	33.3%	22.8%
Youth Organisation 2		4.3%	8.5%	36.2%	38.3%
Survey item: "In my organisation, our managers routinely ask staff and volunteers about procedures related to child safety."					
School 1		17.6%	37.3%	27.5%	9.8%
School 2	2.1%	10.4%	31.3%	29.2%	22.9%
School 3	6.3%	18.8%	25.0%	37.5%	
School 4	1.7%	8.3%	16.7%	38.3%	25.0%
Out-of-home Care Provider	9.1%	16.7%	28.8%	27.3%	16.7%
Sport 1	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	30.0%	
Sport 2	11.7%	23.3%	33.3%	18.3%	11,7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)		25.0%	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%
After Hours School Care		33.3%	6.7%	20.0%	26.7%
Faith-based Organisation	7.9%	7.9%	26.3%	34.2%	15.8%
Youth organisation 1	6.1%	14.0%	35.1%	23.2%	14.5%
Youth Organisation 2		10.6%	14.9%	27.7%	40.4%
Survey item: "The only real way to prevent sexual abuse of children and young people in organisations is to screen staff and volunteers via working with children checks."					
School 1	31.4%	29.4%	9.8%	13.7%	5.9%
School 2	16.7%	25.0%	27.1%	20.8%	8.3%
School 3		37.5%	25.0%	6.3%	12.5%
School 4	15.0%	31.7%	18.3%	18.3%	8.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider	34.8%	30.3%	16.7%	9.1%	6.1%
Sport 1	30.0%	40.0%	20.0%	10.0%	
Sport 2	21.7%	31.7%	21.7%	13.3%	8.3%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	12.5%	25.0%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%
After Hours School Care	20.0%	46.7%	13.3%		6.7%
Faith-based Organisation	21.1%	21.1%	23.7%	18.4%	13.2%
Youth Organisation 1	20.6%	26.3%	20.2%	13.6%	12.3%
Youth Organisation 2	27.7%	27.7%	12.8%	12.8%	19.1%

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Figure 2. Percentage of participants responding either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' managers routinely ask staff and volunteers about procedures related to child safety
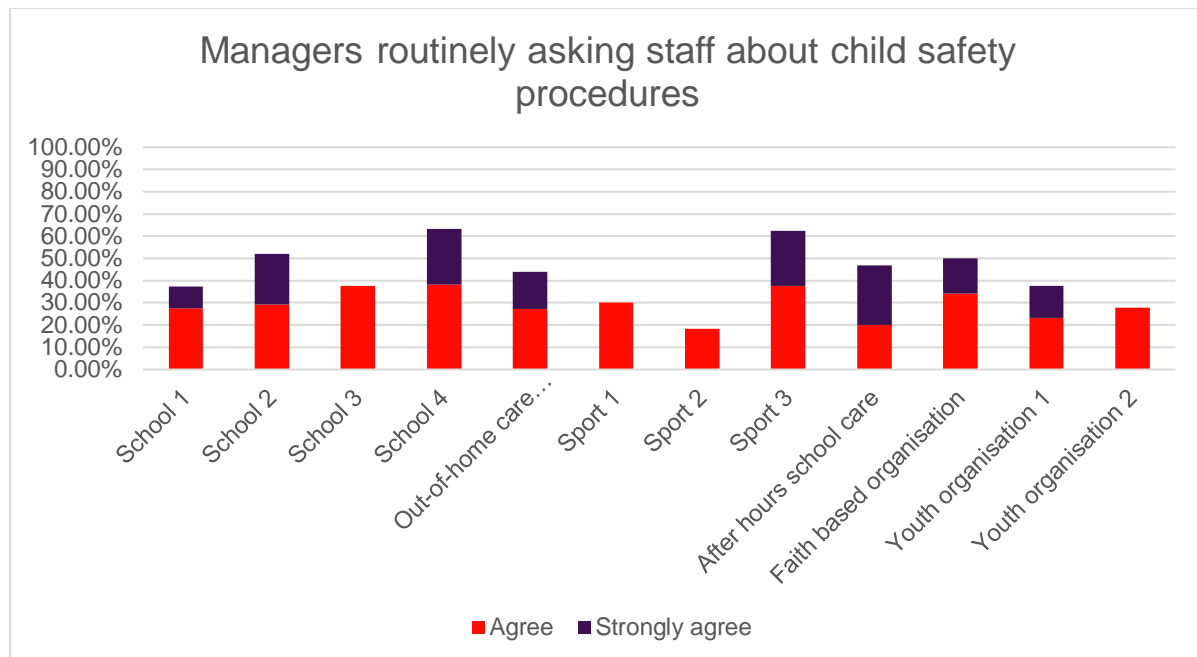
Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Reflections Survey

A consistent view of respondents to the Reflection Survey was that screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices were in place to reduce the risk of child abuse. Four of the respondents were satisfied with existing processes and practices. Four respondents reported the need for their organisation to undertake further work:

> '*Further work to do on this issues* [sic] *of training on sexual abuse and managers ask staff about safeguarding … ratings significantly lower that* [sic] *other questions in survey'* (Out-of-home Care Provider).

> '*Our organisation requires more sophisticated systems and resources to ensure this practice is well implemented across a significantly sized workforce'* (Youth Organisation 2).

> '*There seems to an ambiguity (or perhaps complacency??) around the issue of dealing with third-party contractors and this needs to be further addressed'* (School 2).

> '*We are presently developing online training targeted to all volunteers in relation to safeguarding and specific training for those working with children and young people because we identify that there is this gap'* (Faith-based Organisation).

STANDARD 5: PROCESSES FOR RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Responses to the items from the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey relevant to Standard 5 relate to staff's confidence to act and the organisational culture. Large variance between staff across organisations exists in relation to confidence in mandatory reporting (see Table 22). Staff were more likely to disagree they had confidence to provide appropriate and responsive support to a child if they felt unsafe compared with their confidence in reporting potential abuse. Figure 3 shows the difference between staff's confidence in reporting abuse against staff's confidence to respond supportively when needed.

A similar mismatch between personal feelings towards responsiveness and organisations timeliness in their response, which was agreed to happen by more staff comparatively (see Table 22), could be a result of staff not seeing themselves as part of the organisations response to disclosures of potential and actual abuse.

Table 22. Item responses related to Standard 5

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "I am confident in being able to fulfil my mandatory reporting obligations."					
School 1		2.0%	2.0%	31.4%	54.9%
School 2		2.1%	4.2%	20.8%	70.8%
School 3		6.3%		31.3%	50.0%
School 4				26.7%	66.7%
Out-of-home Care Provider		3.0%		18.2%	72.7%
Sport 1	10.0%			40.0%	40.0%
Sport 2		6.7%	18.3%	33.3%	35.0%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)			12.5%	50.0%	37.5%
After Hours School Care			6.7%	26.7%	66.7%
Faith-based organisation		2.6%	2.6%	31.6%	57.9%
Youth Organisation 1	0.9%	1.8%	5.7%	25.9%	57.0%
Youth Organisation 2	2.1%		2.1%	21.3%	66.0%
Survey item: "I am able to provide appropriate and responsive support to children and young people in instances of sexual abuse."					
School 1		3.9%	21.6%	47.1%	21.6%
School 2		8.3%	22.9%	41.7%	25.0%
School 3	12.5%	12.5%	6.3%	43.8%	6.3%
School 4	1.7%	1.7%	26.7%	36.7%	23.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider		6.1%	12.1%	42.4%	31.8%
Sport 1		10.0%	20.0%	30.0%	30.0%
Sport 2	5.0%	10.0%	35.0%	26.7%	16.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)		12.5%	25.0%	50.0%	12.5%
After Hours School Care	6.7%		13.3%	40.0%	26.7%
Faith-based organisation	2.6%	7.9%	18.4%	34.2%	31.6%
Youth organisation 1	2.2%	5.3%	18.4%	38.6%	29.8%
Youth Organisation 2		2.1%	12.8%	31.9%	42.6%
Survey item: "My organisation is timely in its response and support to children and young people who have experienced abuse."					
School 1			19.6%	29.4%	39.2%
School 2	2.1%	2.1%	16.7%	27.1%	50.0%
School 3			31.3%	37.5%	25.0%
School 4			11.7%	33.3%	43.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider	1.5%	9.1%	7.6%	25.8%	50.0%
Sport 1	10.0%		60.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Sport 2	1.7%	5.0%	43.3%	25.0%	20.0%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)			25.0%	25.0%	50.0%
After Hours School Care			46.7%	6.7%	33.3%
Faith-based organisation			15.8%	34.2%	44.7%
Youth Organisation 1	2.2%	1.3%	30.7%	32.9%	26.3%
Youth Organisation 2			14.9%	17.0%	61.7%

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Figure 3. Responses of agree and strongly agree of mandatory reporting and responsive support questions

Mandatory reporting versus responsive support

Legend: ■ Agree (red) · ■ Agree (purple) · ■ Strongly agree (green) · ■ Strongly agree (grey)
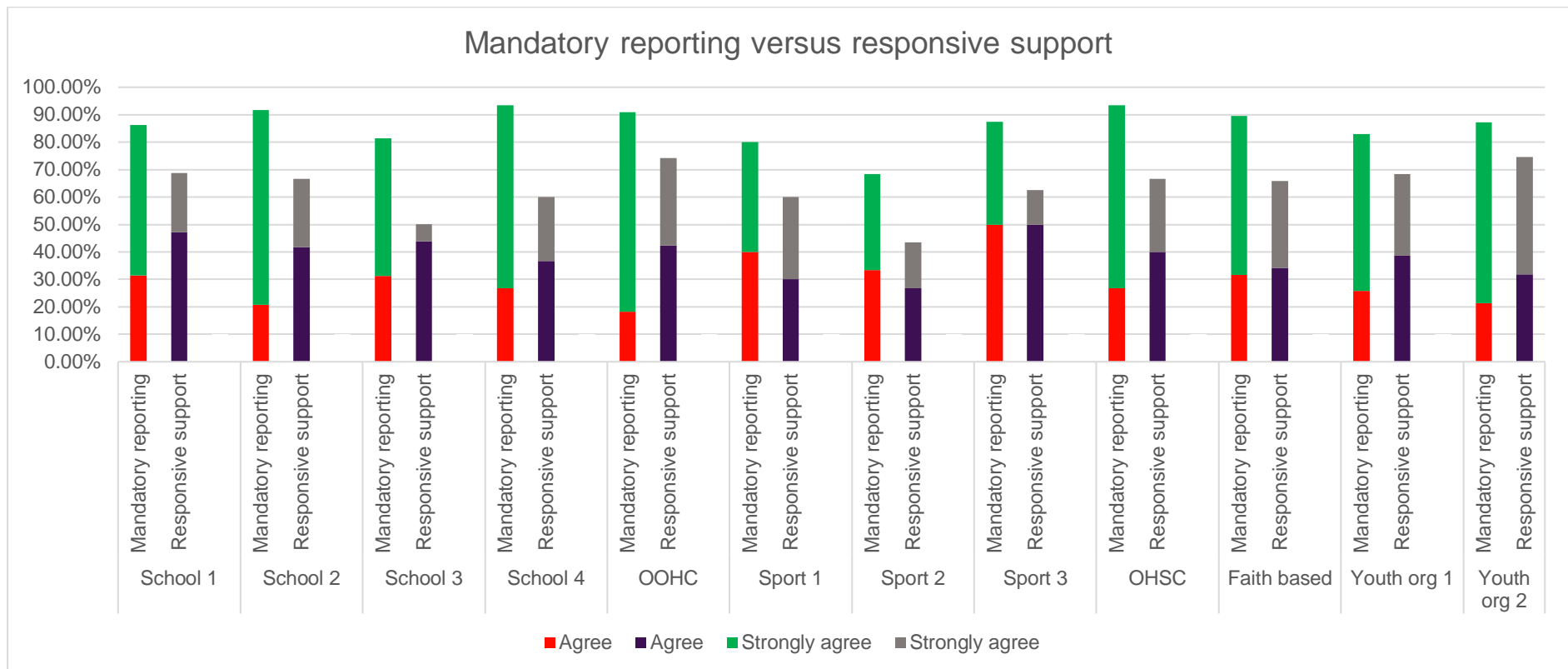
Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

The majority of respondents to the Reflection Survey expressed satisfaction about their processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. Their view was that the processes had been clearly communicated to staff. Consequently, staff were reported as having '*strong awareness of reporting processes*' (Out-of-home Care Provider).

One respondent was concerned about reporting processes. They indicated there was '*not a well-established system in relation to reporting and investigating child-safety related misconduct and child abuse*' (Faith-based Organisation).

Two respondents (Youth-based Organisation 2 and Faith-based Organisation) reflected on the implications of applying these processes. Each respondent indicated the importance of support for children and staff who were reporting and/or responding to suspected child abuse. One respondent (Youth-based Organisation 2) wanted more sophisticated reporting systems to ensure reports of child sexual abuse are well managed within the organisation.

STANDARD 6: STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE THE RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE

Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Staff's responses to the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey relating to Standard 6 come from the organisational culture and awareness of policy and procedures and confidence to act factors. Findings suggest that staff have confidence in identifying risk factors related to perpetrator behaviour, but less so to risk factors associated with vulnerability characteristics of children. Agreement to the question related to characteristics of vulnerability in children was less evident for staff in Category 2 organisations (see Table 23).

Table 23. Item responses related to Standard 6

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "My organisation helps me to understand the characteristics of children and young people that make them more vulnerable to sexual abuse."					
School 1	3.9%	7.8%	23.5%	33.3%	21.6%
School 2		4.2%	27.1%	39.6%	29.2%
School 3		6.3%	25.0%	56.3%	
School 4		5.0%	18.3%	43.4%	25.0%
Out-of-home Care Provider		3.0%	13.6%	39.4%	37.9%
Sport 1	30.0%	20.0%	30.0%		20.0%
Sport 2	8.3%	21.7%	30.0%	25.0%	6.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)		37.5%		50.0%	12.5%
After Hours School Care		20.0%	26.7%	33.3%	13.3%
Faith-based organisation	5.3%	7.9%	28.9%	28.9%	21.1%
Youth Organisation 1	3.5%	8.3%	28.9%	32.0%	22.4%
Youth Organisation 2	4.3%	2.1%	19.1%	21.3%	46.8%
Survey item: "I am confident in my ability to assess potential risks to the sexual safety of children and young people if our organisation undertakes a new type of activity (e.g. an excursion)."					
School 1		5.9%	13.7%	47.1%	25.5%
School 2			10.4%	60.4%	27.1%
School 3		12.5%	18.8%	37.5%	18.8%
School 4		3.3%	15.0%	38.3%	38.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider		3.0%	12.1%	51.5%	30.3%
Sport 1				50.0%	40.0%
Sport 2	1.7%	8.3%	16.7%	40.0%	26.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)		12.5%	12.5%	50.0%	25.0%
After Hours School Care		6.7%	6.7%	46.7%	33.3%
Faith-based organisation	2.6%	5.3%	15.8%	34.2%	31.6%
Youth Organisation 1	1.3%	2.6%	13.2%	36.4%	39.9%
Youth Organisation 2		2.1%	8.5%	31.9%	53.2%

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "My organisation has policies that clearly identify the types of behaviours that could be perceived as grooming."					
School 1			5.9%	27.5%	64.7%
School 2			8.3%	39.6%	47.9%
School 3	6.3%	6.3%	12.5%	43.8%	25.0%
School 4			13.3%	28.3%	43.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider	4.5%	9.1%	13.6%	24.2%	43.9%
Sport 1	20.0%	40.0%		20.0%	10.0%
Sport 2	10.0%	11.7%	35.0%	18.3%	20.0%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)		12.5%	37.5%	12.5%	37.5%
After Hours School Care		6.7%	33.3%	13.3%	33.3%
Faith-based organisation	5.3%	7.9%	21.1%	23.7%	36.8%
Youth Organisation 1	0.9%	4.4%	21.9%	32.5%	33.3%
Youth Organisation 2			4.3%	21.3%	66.0%

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Reflections Survey

Most respondents to the Reflection Survey commented on the need for ongoing work to realise Standard 6. While the respondents' comments consistently indicated that risk mitigation and management strategies existed in their organisation, they wrote about the need for further education about the strategies, monitoring and evaluative activities to reveal the effectiveness of existing strategies and enhanced child participation in risk management.

One respondent (School 1) expressed high confidence in all aspects of their approach to risk identification and management.

STANDARD 7: STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE THE PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF CHILDREN

Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Findings suggest a high variability in staff ratings of the degree to which their organisation values children's opinions in informing policies and procedures. There was not strong agreement overall that their organisations involve children in strategies. This finding was even weaker when looking individually at respondents' rating about their own behaviour: their personal inclusion of children's perspectives (see Table 24).

Table 24. Item responses related to Standard 7

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "My organisation values the opinions of children and young people to help inform child safety policies and procedures."					
School 1		5.9%	25.5%	31.4%	25.5%
School 2		12.5%	22.9%	41.7%	22.9%
School 3		12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	18.8%
School 4		3.3%	20.0%	25.0%	36.7%
Out-of-home Care Provider	1.5%		18.2%	28.8%	43.9%
Sport 1		10.0%	10.0%	30.0%	50.0%
Sport 2		13.3%	25.0%	28.3%	26.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)			12.5%		87.5%
After Hours School Care		6.7%	6.7%	46.7%	26.7%
Faith-based Organisation		2.6%	13.2%	31.6%	44.7%
Youth Organisation 1	0.9%	2.6%	17.5%	35.1%	36.0%
Youth Organisation 2			12.8%	21.3%	57.4%

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "My organisation involves children and young people in strategies designed to protect them from abuse."					
School 1	2.0%	7.8%	37.3%	23.5%	19.6%
School 2		6.3%	31.3%	37.5%	22.9%
School 3		18.8%	50.0%	12.5%	6.3%
School 4		6.7%	30.0%	35.5%	20.0%
Out-of-home Care Provider	1.5%	7.6%	18.2%	36.4%	28.8%
Sport 1		30.0%	30.0%	20.0%	10.0%
Sport 2	16.7%	18.3%	31.7%	20.0%	6.7%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	12.5%		25.0%	12.5%	50.0%
After Hours School Care		6.7%	13.3%	40.0%	26.7%
Faith-based Organisation	5.3%	13.2%	23.7%	18.4%	28.9%
Youth Organisation 1	1.8%	10.1%	31.1%	28.5%	21.5%
Youth Organisation 2		2.1%	29.8%	31.9%	27.7%
Survey item: "I routinely include the perspectives of children and young people in addressing and preventing risk of sexual abuse."					
School 1	3.9%	15.7%	45.1%	15.7%	15.7%
School 2	4.2%	2.1%	35.4%	45.8%	10.4%
School 3		18.8%	62.5%	6.3%	
School 4	1.7%	5.0%	35.0%	31.7%	18.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider		6.1%	16.7%	39.4%	27.3%
Sport 1		20.0%	30.0%	30.0%	10.0%
Sport 2	5.0%	26.7%	30.0%	23.3%	8.3%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)			37.5%	50.0%	12.5%
After Hours School Care	6.7%		20.0%	46.7%	13.3%
Faith-based Organisation	2.6%	7.9%	34.2%	21.1%	26.3%
Youth Organisation 1	1.3%	9.2%	36.0%	28.9%	18.0%
Youth Organisation 2		2.1%	31.9%	31.9%	23.4%

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Reflections Survey

Respondents' written comments about the implementation of Standard 7 revealed varying perspectives on their progress toward child participation and empowerment. Four respondents to the Reflection Survey (Sport 2, Youth Organisations 1 and 2 and Faith-based organisation) commented that the implementation of Standard 7 represented a 'work in progress'. A consistent view of these four respondents was that a specialist skill set was required to ensure effective and meaningful child participation and empowerment. These organisations wrote about being in the process of obtaining external or building in-house expertise.

One of these respondents was concerned about a lack of consistency in the approach adopted to facilitate child participation and empowerment. They wrote: '*There is no consistent strategy in relation to the participation and empowerment of children and also education in relation to sexual safety skills'* (Faith-based Organisation).

Two respondents' comments indicated a high level of confidence in all aspects of their organisations approach to child participation and empowerment:

'*Our pastoral care program has been revised over recent years to incorporate more information to students about their rights and knowledge around child-safety reforms and the importance of them feeling safe. This has resulted in increased awareness by our young people, as evident by increased self-referral to key people within the* [organisation], *about concerns that they have. It has also reinforced the importance of student voice'* (School 2)

'*[Survey results] affirming of the policy developed, education provided and importance held'* (School 1)

The remaining three respondents (School 3, Out-of-home Care Provider and Sport 1) made no comment about Standard 7.

Children's Safety Survey

In addition to the factors of organisational culture and confidence to act in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey, consideration of how Standard 7 is being implemented in youth-serving organisations across Victoria would benefit from reflecting on findings from the Children's Safety Survey.

Table 25 outlines the mean scores across the three safety scales in the Children's Safety Survey by organisation. Higher scores represent more positive views (i.e., more confidence in adults or fewer barriers to help-seeking). Young people felt that Category 2 organisations have better child-safe cultures than Category 1, keeping in mind that only schools measured young people's views in Category 1. Schools were perceived as being significantly poorer across all three factors measured by the Children's Safety Survey when compared with youth organisations and sports.

Table 25. Young people's perceptions of safety: data from Child informed organisational safety climate (CIOSC), Confidence in Adults (CiA), and Barriers to help-seeking (BTHS) scales of the Children's Safety Survey

		CIOSC		CiA				BtHS			
				Adult		Peer		Adult		Peer	
	Organisation	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Category 1	School 1	1.69	.31	3.74	.88	3.87	.89	4.43	.99	3.71	1.45
	School 2	1.10	.43	3.51	.91	3.46	.80	3.03	.96	3.16	.86
	School 3	1.12	.42	3.36	.78	3.19	.67	3.17	.79	3.30	.82
	School 4	1.24	.44	3.55	.80	3.35	.87	3.18	.77	3.14	.81
	Out-of-home Care Provider	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Category 2	Sport 1	1.81	.19	3.87	.39	4.33	.00	4.24	.08	4.20	1.13
	Sport 2	1.62	.32	3.85	.75	3.91	.75	4.01	.58	4.20	.76
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	1.67		3.86		3.00		3.00		3.00	
	After Hours School Care	1.47	.31	3.82	.65	3.70	.92	3.90	.87	3.52	1.11
	Faith-based Organisation	1.48	.44	3.51	.77	3.89	.68	3.70	.80	3.67	1.04
	Youth Organisation 1	1.73	.21	4.09	.56	4.00	.61	4.11	.64	4.07	.56
	Youth Organisation 2	1.89	.14	5.00	.00	5.00	.00	4.71	.26	4.89	.21

CIOSC score 0 – 2, CiA and BtHS score 1 – 5

To test for differences between organisations scores in the Children's Safety Survey, a Kruskal-Wallis analysis of variance was conducted (see Table 26) with appropriate post-hoc tests to identify organisation-to-organisation differences. Significant differences were found each of the three scales.

Table 26. Analysis of Variance between all 12 organisations on each factor of the Children's Safety Survey

Factor	ANOVA finding
Child Informed Organisational Safety Climate	$\chi^2(10) = 110.9$, $p = .000$
Confidence in Adults (Adult scenario)	$\chi^2(10) = 41.7$, $p = .000$
Confidence in Adults (Peer scenario)	$\chi^2(10) = 53.0$, $p = .000$
Barriers to Help Seeking (Adult scenario)	$\chi^2(10) = 74.2$, $p = .000$
Barriers to Help Seeking (Peer scenario)	$\chi^2(10) = 60.1$, $p = .000$

A summary of key messages from the bivariate analyses (organisation-to-organisation comparison of pairs) is shown in Table 27 below.

Table 27. Differences between organisations scores in the Children's Safety Survey

Scale	Observed differences
Child informed organisational safety climate (CIOSC)	Schools 2 and 3 were both significantly lower in mean CIOSC score than Sports 1 and 2, and both Youth Organisation 1 and 2. School 4 was significantly lower than Sport 2 and Youth Organisation 1. Young people who were engaging with Category 2 organisations (non-funded/regulated) scored higher in terms their perceptions of the organisation's culture of child safety when compared with schools (Category 1).
Confidence in Adults (CiA)	When comparing mean scores for CiA when considering an unsafe situation involving an adult, young people's scores from Schools 2 and 3 were significantly lower than both youth organisations, while School 4 was significantly lower than Youth Organisation 2 and Sport 2. The same pattern of differences was significant in the peer-based scenario except for the fact that School 2 was not significantly different to Youth Organisation 1. As with the CIOSC scale, young people's responses indicated more positive responses (i.e., greater confidence in adults) for those from Category 2 organisations, compared to Category 1 (schools).
Barriers to help-seeking (BTHS)	Across both scenarios (risk from adults; risk from peers), the same pattern of significant differences regarding children's barriers to help-seeking was apparent overall: Schools 2, 3 and 4 all scored significantly lower (i.e., more barriers were apparent) than both youth organisations and Sport 2.

Source: Children's Safety Survey

From young people's perspectives, it appears that Category 2 organisations are better at responding to safety issues through the fact there was less disagreement with the statement that adults know what to do or say in the event a young person felt unsafe (see Table 28).

Young people's responses also indicated that they feel adults in their organisations know what to say or do more so in the event an adult has made them feel uncomfortable or unsafe, compared to when a peer has made them feel unsafe. Young people in faith-based organisations were more likely to be unsure than young people in any other organisation.

Table 28. Young people's perceptions of responses to and reporting of safety issues

Organisation	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		I'm not sure	
Survey item: "Adults at [ORGANISATION] would know what to say to me if I told them I was unsafe."												
	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer
School 1							20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%
School 2	4.2%	1.4%	4.2%	1.4%	22.2%	26.4%	26.4%	19.4%	12.5%	5.6%	11.1%	6.9%
School 3	3.8%	5.1%	6.3%	6.3%	22.8%	34.2%	27.8%	17.7%	8.9%	5.1%	21.5%	16.5%
School 4		4.9%	7.3%	4.9%	22.0%	22.0%	32.9%	25.6%	17.1%	14.6%	12.2%	11.0%
OOHC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sport 1							60.0%	20%		20%		
Sport 2					5.6%	16.7%	27.8%	27.8%	33.3%	27.8%	22.2%	5.6%
Sport 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OHS Care					20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%		
Faith-based Org				14.3%	14.3%	14.3%	28.6%	28.6%	14.3%	14.3%	28.6%	14.3%
Youth Org 1					10.7%	8.9%	42.9%	41.1%	26.8%	26.8%	8.9%	8.9%
Youth Org 2									100%	100%		
Survey item: "Adults at [ORGANISATION] would know what to do if I told them I was unsafe."												
	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer	Adult	Peer
School 1					20.0%		20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
School 2	4.2%	1.4%	4.2%	5.6%	20.8%	19.4%	27.8%	19.4%	13.9%	8.3%	11.1%	8.3%
School 3	3.8%	3.8%	5.1%	3.8%	26.6%	39.2%	27.8%	17.7%	7.6%	2.5%	20.3%	19.0%
School 4	1.2%	4.9%	9.8%	6.1%	22.0%	24.4%	29.3%	18.3%	17.1%	14.6%	12.2%	14.6%
OOHC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sport 1							40.0%		20.0%	20.0%		20.0%
Sport 2					5.6%	11.1%	38.9%	33.3%	16.7%	5.6%	22.2%	27.8%
Sport 3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
OHS care				20.0%		20.0%	80.0%	20.0%		20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Faith-based Org		14.3%			28.6%		42.9%	42.9%	14.3%	28.6%	14.3%	
Youth Org 1		1.8%		5.4%	5.4%	10.7%	42.9%	33.9%	37.5%	28.6%	7.1%	7.1%
Youth Org 2									100%		100%	

Young people's responses indicated that they didn't feel their views were valued in schools as much as other organisations; and other than in the faith-based organisation, were more likely to be unsure if their opinions are valued (see Table 29). Except for one youth organisation, young people were unsure whether adults spoke with them about things that worry them and were even more unsure whether their thoughts and opinions were valued.

Table 29. Young people's perceptions of their agency

Organisation	Never	Some of the time	All of the time	I'm not sure
Survey item: "Adults at [ORGANISATION] value children's views and opinions."				
School 1		40.0%	60.0%	
School 2	18.1%	54.2%	11.1%	12.5%
School 3	11.4%	58.2%	20.3%	10.1%
School 4	11.1%	56.1%	23.2%	9.8%
Out-of-home Care Provider	-	-	-	-
Sport 1		20.0%	80.0%	
Sport 2	5.6%	27.8%	66.7%	
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	-	-	-	-
After Hours School Care		80.0%	20.0%	
Faith-based Organisation		28.6%	28.6%	42.9%
Youth Organisation 1		21.4%	78.6%	
Youth Organisation 2		25.0%	75.0%	
Survey item: "At [ORGANISATION] adults talk with children and young people about things that worry children and young people."				
School 1		60.0%	40.0%	
School 2	11.1%	50.0%	18.1%	16.7%
School 3	10.1%	46.8%	17.7%	25.3%
School 4	15.9%	45.1%	26.8%	11.0%
Out-of-home Care Provider	-	-	-	-
Sport 1		20.0%	40.0%	40.0%
Sport 2	33.3%	11.1%	22.2%	33.3%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	-	-	-	-
After Hours School Care	20.0%	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%
Faith-based Organisation	42.9%		14.3%	42.9%
Youth Organisation 1	3.6%	57.1%	25.0%	14.3%
Youth Organisation 2			100.0%	

Source: Children's Safety Survey

7.4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WELLBEING AND PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

We investigated the relationship between young people's perceptions of safety and their wellbeing and quality of life. To do this, we ran correlational analyses for the overall sample, and then for each organisation individually.

WELLBEING

Better perceptions of safety in youth-serving organisations, including the culture of child safety, confidence levels in adults and a lack of barriers to help-seeking, are associated with positive wellbeing in young people. Table 30 presents these findings for each organisation.

Table 30. Correlation (Spearman Rho) between Strengths and Difficulties data (Pro-social behaviour and Difficulties subscales) and sores on measures of safety

Organisation	Mean	SD	CIOSC	CiA Adult Scenario	CiA Peer Scenario	BtHS Adult Scenario	BtHS Peer Scenario
Pro-social behaviour subscale of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire							
			r	*r*	*r*	*r*	*r*
School 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
School 2	6.99	2.09	.12	.24	.37*	-.02	.08
School 3	6.68	1.80	.17	.23	.18	.13	.21
School 4	7.26	1.72	.08	.00	.15	-.14	.02
Out-of-home Care	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sport 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sport 2	7.71	1.80	-.21	.17	.34	-.02	.01
Sport 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
OSH Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Faith-based Org	8.17	.79	.57	-.42	.37	.09	.62
Youth Organisation 1	8.87	1.25	.03	.04	-.03	-.05	.01
Youth Organisation 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Difficulties subscale of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire							
			r	r	r	r	r
School 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
School 2	14.82	5.85	-.20	-.25	-.28	-.05	.02
School 3	14.38	6.15	-.43**	-.20	-.28*	-.35**	-.41**
School 4	12.65	5.44	-.42**	-.21	-.35**	-.26*	-.26*
Out-of-home care	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sport 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sport 2	11.00	5.35	.19	-.40	-.25	.31	.23
Sport 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
OSC Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Faith-based Org	8.44	5.33	-.07	-.41	-.64	-.45	-.75
Youth Organisation 1	10.27	5.66	-.13	-.25	-.10	-.21	-.16
Youth Organisation 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Children's Safety Survey, including SDQ

* *p* <.05, ** *p* <.001
N/A = Not available (not enough data)
Correlations were unable to be interpreted with confidence for organisations with small samples (less than 6 participants). Findings are replaced with N/A.

Analyses of the associations between the positive (Prosocial) and negative (Difficulties) subscales of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire demonstrate that there is a significant association between young people's wellbeing and their perceptions of safety. This finding was noted with the correlations between difficulty scores, which were inversely related to higher levels of safety. Correlations were significant in the education sector where schools, specifically Schools 3 and 4, had significant associations between the negative (difficulty) aspect of wellbeing and perceptions of safety.

PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE

As with the association between children's perceptions of safety and wellbeing, the same pattern was found when investigating children's perceptions of safety and health-related quality of life. Better perceptions of safety within youth-serving organisations were associated with a higher quality of life. Table 31 shows how the pattern of significance when investigating each organisation individually mirrors that of the findings related to wellbeing.

Table 31. Spearman Rho correlation between Quality of Life (CHU9D) and safety scores

Organisation	Mean	SD	CIOSC	CiA Adult Scenario	CiA Peer Scenario	BtHS Adult Scenario	BtHS Peer Scenario
Child Health Utility 9 Dimensions scores							
			r	*r*	*r*	*r*	*r*
School 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
School 2	3.65	.84	.09	.16	.28	-.02	-.17
School 3	3.85	.79	.44**	.32*	.34**	.37**	.31*
School 4	4.00	.68	.58**	.21	.32*	.34**	.26*
Out-of-home Care Provider	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sport 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sport 2	4.52	.40	-.02	.36	.19	-.03	.08
Sport 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
After Hours School Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	. N/A	N/A
Faith-based Organisation	4.56	.46	.07	.62	.75	.47	.73
Youth Organisation 1	4.08	.68	.10	.30*	.12	.18	.25
Youth Organisation 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Children's Safety Survey, including CHU9D

* = significant at <.05, ** = significant at <.001, N/A = Not available (not enough data)

Analysis of the association between quality of life and perceptions of safety by organisation shows that this association is significant within the education sector, with Schools 3 and 4 again showing significant positive correlations, indicating that better perceptions of safety is associated with a higher quality of life. The association was not found to be significant outside of schools except when considering children's confidence in adults in an adult-based situation in one of the youth development organisations.

7.5. PRINCIPLES

Responses to questions in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey relating to the organisational culture and awareness of policy and procedures and confidence to act illustrate staff's self-efficacy and feelings towards organisational culture related to the Principles underpinning the Standards.

Responses in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey show that staff agree that organisations promote positive attitudes towards diverse young people, however less strong agreement to confidence shows promotion of positive attitudes towards diverse groups does not translate to confidence to support children in these groups (see Table 32).

Table 32. Safeguarding related to children from diversity groups reflected in the Principles

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "My organisation actively promotes positive attitudes towards people including children and young people from different ages, genders, abilities, faiths, sexualities, and ethnic or cultural backgrounds."					
School 1	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	37.3%	49.0%
School 2		2.1%	10.4%	33.3%	52.1%
School 3		6.3%	6.3%	56.3%	12.5%
School 4			8.3%	33.3%	48.3%
Out-of-home Care Provider	1.5%	1.5%	4.5%	27.3%	59.1%
Sport 1	10.0%		10.0%	10.0%	70.0%
Sport 2	1.7%	3.3%	13.3%	25.0%	50.0%
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)				12.5%	87.5%
After Hours School Care			6.7%	20.0%	60.0%
Faith-based Organisation	2.6%	5.3%	5.3%	26.3%	50.0%
Youth Organisation 1		0.9%	6.1%	20.6%	65.8%
Youth Organisation 2			4.3%	12.8%	70.2%

Organisation	Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
Survey item: "I lack confidence in how to look out for the sexual health and safety of children and young people with disabilities/additional needs."					
School 1	21.6%	39.2%	17.6%	15.7%	
School 2	22.9%	50.0%	14.6%	8.3%	2.1%
School 3	12.5%	50.0%	25.0%		
School 4	28.3%	36.7%	16.7%	5.0%	1.7%
Out-of-home Care Provider	22.7%	34.8%	21.2%	9.1%	6.1%
Sport 1	30.0%	30.0%	20.0%		10.0%
Sport 2	18.3%	20.0%	30.0%	23.3%	
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	37.5%	37.5%	25.0%		
After Hours School Care	20.0%	26.7%	26.7%	13.3%	6.7%
Faith-based Organisation	21.1%	21.1%	28.9%	18.4%	2.6%
Youth Organisation 1	24.6%	31.1%	20.2%	14.9%	1.3%
Youth Organisation 2	48.9%	29.8%	10.6%	4.3%	

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey

Five independent sample t-tests were conducted to identify if there were any significant differences between young people who identified as CALD versus non CALD identifying young people across the 3 scales, twice for the confidence in adults and barriers to help-seeking scales.

There was a significant difference in the CIOSC scores for CALD ($M = 1.25$, $SD = .42$) and non-CALD ($M = 1.36$, $SD = .48$) groups of young people; $t(234) = 2.10$, $p = 0.37$. A significant difference was also found in the barriers to help-seeking in an adult situation scores for CALD ($M = 3.21$, $SD = .79$) and non-CALD ($M = 3.56$, $SD = .92$) conditions; $t(191) = 3.18$, $p < .01$. Indicating that CALD young people have poorer views of the child-safe culture in organisations and face more barriers when seeking help.

A t-test was also conducted for the question 'I feel safe at [ORGANISATION]' between respondents who identified as CALD ($M = 1.50$, $SD = .57$) versus those who did not ($M = 1.55$, $SD = .64$). No significant difference was found between groups; $t(298) = .63$, $p > .05$.

Responses to the question on whether CALD young people felt safe at their organisation revealed that CALD young people felt as safe as their non-CALD peers. Yet their responses to the seven items in the CIOSC scale revealed CALD young people perceived the child-informed organisational safety climate more poorly than their non-CALD peers. This finding suggests that while CALD children and young people feel safe it is not necessarily because different conditions of safety (e.g., at least one adult they can trust) exist within their organisation.

REFLECTIONS SURVEY

The Reflections Survey asked organisational leaders about whether the principles in the Standards helped create safe environments for children from diverse backgrounds. Seven respondents addressed these questions. Their responses are shown in Table 33. Around half of the respondents agreed (or strongly agreed) the Principles were helpful. At least one (sometimes two) respondents were unsure of how helpful the Principles were and the other disagreed that the principles supported safe environments for children from diverse backgrounds. The respondent who disagreed appreciated that children from diverse backgrounds face unique challenges but felt the principles did not translate into greater support for these young people.

Two respondents (Youth Organisations 1 and 2) noted their efforts to engage with families and communities from diverse backgrounds to strengthen their efforts to create a safe environment for their young people.

Table 33. Number of respondents indicating each level of agreement/disagreement as to whether the principles supported safe environments for children from diverse backgrounds (n = 8)

	Do you agree or disagree that the Child Safe Standards support your organisation to create a safe environment for:	Aboriginal children?	CALD children?	Children with a disability?
Category 1	School 1	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
	School 2	Don't know	Agree	Strongly agree
	School 3	No answer	No answer	No answer
	School 4	No response	No response	No response
	Out-of-home Care Provider	Strongly agree	Strongly agree	Strongly agree
Category 2	Sport 1	No response	No response	No response
	Sport 2	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know
	Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	No response	No response	No response
	After Hours School Care	No response	No response	No response
	Faith-based Organisation	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree
	Youth Organisation 1	Agree	Agree	Agree
	Youth Organisation 2	Agree	Agree	Agree

Source: Reflections Survey

Respondents were asked about other groups of children or young people experiencing vulnerabilities that their organisation believes should be incorporated specifically into the Standards. Four respondents identified gender/sexuality diverse children (LGBTQIA+). The other groups identified were homeless children, children experiencing trauma and children with mental health concerns.

8. Summary and implications

The results of the research project highlight several key findings that can be used to support the review of the Victorian Child Safe Standards, and be considered by Government, regulatory bodies and youth-serving organisations to improve the way in which young people are made to be and feel safe.

Table 34 provides a summary comparison of key messages from across the three surveys, highlighting where organisations were in the highest, middle-ranked, or lowest of the 12 participating organisations, along with an overarching summary based on the organisational leader Reflection Survey.

Table 34. Comparisons across all surveys

Organisation	Safeguarding Capabilities Survey						Children's Safety Survey						Reflections Survey
	n	Aware	Conf	Att	Know	Overall	*n*	CIOSC	CIA-A	CIA-P	BtHS-A	BtHS-P	Organisational Leader (*n* = 8)
School 1	51	4.14	3.90	4.42	3.93	12.25	5	1.69	3.74	3.87	4.43	3.71	Respondent is extremely satisfied with their organisation's response to child-safe practice
School 2	48	4.13	4.00	4.34	4.10	12.44	72	1.10	3.51	3.46	3.03	3.16	
School 3	16	3.71	3.62	4.29	3.68	11.59	79	1.12	3.36	3.19	3.17	3.30	Respondent extremely satisfied with child-safeguarding policy and practice in their organisation
School 4	60	4.21	4.04	4.27	4.03	12.34	82	1.24	3.55	3.35	3.18	3.14	
OOHC	66	4.03	4.20	4.49	4.14	12.83		-	-	-	-	-	Respondent reports considerable steps to improving child-safe practice
Sport 1	10	3.62	3.71	4.55	4.15	10	5	1.81	3.87	4.33	4.24	4.20	
Sport 2	60	3.47	3.59	4.22	4.03	11.84	18	1.62	3.85	3.91	4.01	4.20	Respondent reported need for improvement in systems, process and procedures, community education and child participation and empowerment
Sport 3 (includes an Aboriginal-specific service)	8	4.15	4.01	4.21	3.60	11.82	1	1.67	3.86	3.00	3.00	3.00	

Organisation	Safeguarding Capabilities Survey						Children's Safety Survey						Reflections Survey
	n	Aware	Conf	Att	Know	Overall	n	CIOSC	CIA-A	CIA-P	BtHS-A	BtHS-P	Organisational Leader (n = 8)
AHSC	15	3.94	3.90	4.20	4.24	12.34	6	1.47	3.82	3.70	3.90	3.52	
Faith-based Org	38	3.97	3.96	4.37	4.18	12.51	7	1.48	3.51	3.89	3.70	3.67	Respondent identified structural and resourcing issues that inhibit the effective implementation of child safety
Youth Org 1	228	4.01	3.97	4.32	4.07	12.36	55	1.73	4.09	4.00	4.11	4.07	Respondent confident in responses to the physical safety of children but wants more action other elements of safety (e.g., emotional wellbeing). Also looking for improvements in child participation and empowerment.
Youth Org 2	47	4.33	4.29	4.31	4.25	12.85	4	1.89	5.00	5.00	4.71	4.89	Respondent mindful of the need to manage for continuous improvement and mitigate the risk of complacency in the implementation of child-safe practice

Source: Safeguarding Capabilities Survey; : Children's Safety Survey; Reflections Survey

Abbreviations

Aware: Organisational Culture and awareness of organisational policies and procedures
Conf: Confidence to act
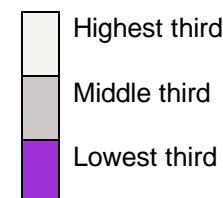Att: Attitudes to prevention and agency of young people
Know: Situational prevention knowledge and education
CIOSC: Child Informed Organisational Safety Climate
CIA: Confidence in adults
BtHS Barriers to help-seeking

Colour coding of Mean rank:

Highest third

Middle third

Lowest third

8.1. DIFFERENT SOURCES: DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Responses from the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey revealed that staff from the participating sports organisations and to a lesser extent the schools did not seem as well equipped as their peers at other organisations for implementation of the Standards. Participating youth organisations, and the other Category 2 organisations (outside of school hours care and faith-based) had staff who felt more positive towards their capability to safeguard children.

Young people's perceptions of the child-safe climate in organisations mostly corresponded to those of staff. Compared to their peers at Category 2 organisations, young people indicated that schools were poorer at fostering a child-safe climate and having adults that young people have confidence in. Young people at schools also perceived more barriers to help-seeking than their peers at youth organisations. Young people's confidence in adults at schools was lower than their peers at Category 2 organisations. However, unlike staff, the young people at two of the three sports organisations appeared to express confidence in the organisation's child-safe climate. The mis-matched findings for sports organisations suggest that staff and young people's perceptions do not always align.

Findings from the Children's Safety Survey revealed that high scores in one aspect of child safety (e.g., young people's perceptions of the child-safety climate) corresponded with higher scores across other ASK-YP scales (e.g., confidence level in adults and fewer barriers to help-seeking).

8.2. ORGANISATIONAL CONSISTENCY BUT INTRA-SECTORAL DIFFERENCES

There was large variance between organisations regarding organisational culture, awareness of policies and procedures, confidence to act and knowledge of situational prevention. The one exception is attitudes towards prevention. This factor had a much smaller variance. This finding suggests that staff across all participating youth-serving organisations held similar positive attitudes towards child sexual abuse prevention. Positive attitudes to prevention represented the highest-ranking factor in 11 out of 12 of the participating organisations. These positive attitudes represented a strength of the organisations that took part in the study.

Findings are not always consistent within sectors. Findings for the education sector revealed that one school was doing considerably better than the other three in terms of staff and young people's perceptions of child safeguarding. Inconsistencies were also evident in findings for the participating organisations from the sporting sector. Overall, young people rated two sports organisations highly and one poorly against the ASK-YP scales.

Differences were apparent in staff and young people survey results. Schools 2 and 4 received positive scores in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey, but not in the Children's Safety Survey.

Sport 2 had lower scores in the Safeguarding Capabilities Survey in comparison to not only the other sports organisations, but almost all organisations. The nature and set up of Sports 2 may have played a part in the lower scores. As a peak body with member organisations the coordinating the implementation of the Standards may have posed challenges not confronted by other participating organisations.

8.3. INTRA-ORGANISATIONAL INCONSISTENCY

Staff's perceptions of cultures of child safety varied considerable within organisations. Analysis of the standard deviations and the spread across categories of agreement or disagreement to questions in the Safeguarding Capabilities revealed considerable variation. The variation could be due to different staff reporting on different aspects of an organisation and their individual propensity for viewing organisational issues positively or negatively. Variations may also be apparent because there are fundamental differences in the culture and climate of organisations, and the in the individual capability of staff.

8.4. COMPLIANCE VERSUS CULTURAL CHANGE IN PRACTICE

Staff seem to agree that compliance-based processes and concepts, such as the development of codes of conduct and other safeguarding policies, are well managed. However, there was variability in staff views on the extent to which child safety procedures were routinely included in day-to-day practice.

8.5. ATTITUDES TO PRINCIPLES

Data related to the principles showed that staff in Category 2 organisations demonstrated a high level of positive attitudes towards young people in diverse groups than staff in Category 1 organisations. Staff indicated that Aboriginal young people, CALD young people and young people living with a disability required additional/specific support. However, this did not necessarily translate to confidence in their ability to provide responsive support. There is no conclusive data about staff levels of confidence in supporting young people in these communities.

Young people who felt safe in schools reported a stronger sense of wellbeing and quality of life. But there was no correlation between how safe young people in Category 2 organisations felt and their sense of wellbeing and quality of life.

8.6. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STANDARDS

When the survey results suggested than an organisation was doing poorly against one standard, that same organisation was more likely to be doing poorly against the other standards.

Of all the Standards, Standard 7 is one that most organisations were struggling to implement. Large variance between the organisations indicates that staff in organisations working with children and young people do not have consistent feelings towards valuing and including children in matters related to their safety. While most staff across the organisations felt children and young people's opinions were valued, this did not translate to the inclusion of children in strategies designed to protect them.

8.7. VALUE OF EMPIRICAL DATA TO AID REFLECTION ON PROGRESS IN THE JOURNEY OF SAFEGUARDING

Overall participants' responses to the Reflection Survey indicated that viewing their results was valuable in helping them understand their progress toward the consolidation of a child-safe culture.

Even where there are positive indications of a child-safe culture and practice, the number of organisations with strong agreement was not as high as you'd like (particularly in relation to questions related to Standard 6). This could suggest therefore that staff are wanting more training and support in identification of risk, and how to develop and implement mitigation strategies to address risks.

The results of the Reflection Survey concur with these findings, suggesting a tendency for organisations to have a predominant focus on the role of the Standards 'compliance' versus capacity building. However, the small number of organisations participating (12) and the low response rate to the Reflections Survey (66%) suggest caution should be taken before drawing firm conclusions regarding this.

An analysis of the comments in the Reflections Survey suggest that Sport 2 was comparatively circumspect about their progress with the implementation of the Standards. The respondent from this organisation typically acknowledged achievements (e.g., adoption of a code of conduct) and then reflected on the need for ongoing efforts to enhance the adoption of the policy, practice or strategy.

8.8. LIMITATIONS

The findings of this study can not be generalised to the overall population due to the sampling methods used to recruit organisations. The methods were designed to ensure a broad scope of organisation types (i.e. across sectors and across Categories 1 and 2) were recruited through a convenience sampling approach. Equally, the approaches for recruitment utilised by the organisations themselves were self-managed and therefore cannot speak to generalisation of the findings.

An additional limitation relates to the *a priori* analysis. It indicated a sample of 448 in each survey to ensure an adequate number of participants to identify significant findings. The fact that this was not met in the Children's Safety Survey affects the analyses related to differences between participants in different groups (i.e., CALD young people and their peers) or in identifying relationships between variables (i.e. young people's confidence in adults and wellbeing). By having a smaller than preferred sample size it is possible that some significant relationships or differences may exist which have not been identified, or alternatively that significant relationships were noted when they do not actually exist.

Organisations specifically working with young people with a disability or from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds were approached to participate. These organisations expressed reservations regarding the accessibility of the survey. The Children's Safety Survey has not yet been adapted in consultation with Aboriginal service providers, Elders and other important figures within Aboriginal communities. Similarly, the survey has not yet been adapted for young people with physical or cognitive disabilities. Consequently, limited data were collected from Aboriginal young people and no data from young people with disabilities. Lack of data limits reflections on the implementation of the principles of the Victorian Child Safe Standards for young people from diverse backgrounds.

9. Conclusion

Organisations across the range of sectors that come under the Victorian Child Safe Standards have considered what it means to have a child-safe culture and the strategies, policies and procedures needed to support the development of this culture. Staff and volunteers completing the Safeguarding Capabilities survey, and the eight leaders who fully completed the Reflections survey had positive attitudes towards the safeguarding of children and young people. When considering staff and volunteers' awareness of policies and self-efficacy to act however, we found that more staff—and indeed some organisational leaders—believe that the Standards have supported the development of compliance-based processes. There is evidence that at this early stage of implementation of the Standards, that organisations are currently compliance-based, with less evidence of a mentality of fostering—and achieving—genuine culture change in the skills and capabilities that underpin child-safe practices.

Young people's perceptions are an important aspect of Standard 7. Data collected from young people suggested that they are less confident with the safety climate in schools compared to other organisations. Although, young people at school did feel confident adults would support them if they were to feel unsafe. There was a significant relationship between perceptions of safety and the wellbeing of young people from schools, more so than other organisations. Young people felt less confident in the ability of schools to keep them safe, and yet schools are the place where the level of safety the young people perceived was most strongly related to their wellbeing and quality of life.

Organisations found it useful to have the opportunity to reflect upon their child-safe journey and the ability to measure the conditions of safety that would support them in developing a child-safe culture, and thus meet the requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

10. References

Goodman, R. (1997). The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire: A research note. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 38(5),* 581-586.

Higgins, D. J. (2017, September 12). *Protecting children from abuse in organisations needs leadership and cultural change.* The Conversation [online]. Available at: https://theconversation.com/protecting-children-from-abuse-in-organisations-needs-leadership-and-cultural-change-83502

Moore, T., McArthur, M., Heerde, J., Roche, S. & O'Leary, P., 2016, Our safety counts: Children and young people's perceptions of safety and institutional responses to their safety concerns. Melbourne: Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University. Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Sydney.

Moore, T., McArthur, M., Noble-Carr, D., & Harcourt, D., 2015, Taking us seriously: children and young people talk about safety and institutional responses to their safety concerns, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne. Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Sydney.

Peter, T. (2008). Speaking about the unspeakable: exploring the impact of mother-daughter sexual abuse. *Violence against women*, *14*(9), 1033–1053.

Russell, D., & Higgins, D. (2019). *Safeguarding capabilities in preventing child sexual abuse: A scale measuring knowledge, attitudes and skills applicable to all youth-serving sectors.* Manuscript under review.

Stevens, K. J. (2010). Working with Children to Develop Dimensions for a Preference-Based, Generic, Pediatric Health-Related Quality-of-Life Measure. *Qualitative Health Research, 20:* 340–351.

Stevens, K J. (2009). Developing a descriptive system for a new preference-based measure of health-related quality of life for children. *Quality of Life Research, 18*(8), 1105–1113.

Stevens, K J. (2011). Assessing the performance of a new generic measure of health-related quality of life for children and refining it for use in health state valuation. *Applied Health Economics and Health Policy, 9*(3), 157–169.

Stevens, K. (2010). The Child Health Utility 9D (CHU9D) – *A New Paediatric Preference Based Measure of Health-Related Quality of Life*. PRO Newsletter #43. May 2010.

11. Appendix 1 – Reflections Survey

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in the 'Reflecting on your results' survey described below.

WHAT IS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

The project relates to your organisation's use of the Australian Safe Kids and Young People[4] [now referred to as the Children's Safety Survey], and Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys. These surveys are available to youth-serving organisations via the ACU Safeguarding Children and Young People Portal. The surveys aim to support organisations to reflect upon their current policies and practices and how these relate to the Victorian Child Safe Standards in an effort to improve the safeguarding of children and young people. By understanding the utility of the surveys, researchers will be able to support organisations in their approaches to improving safeguarding practices.

WHO IS UNDERTAKING THE PROJECT?

The ACU Institute of Child Protection Studies is conducting the study on behalf of the Department of Health and Human Services. The department is funding the project and extends this invitation to you to participate.

Professor Daryl Higgins, Director of the Institute of Child Protection Studies, is the chief investigator. He has over 25 years' experience working in research conducting studies to help protect children and young people from harm. He is a registered psychologist and is committed to the reduction of harm in all its forms. The staff at ICPS have worked with hundreds of children, both as practitioners and researchers.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROJECT?

There are no foreseeable risks associated with taking part in this survey. The department **will not** be provided with any identifying data about your organisation's staff or children. Your organisation will not be named in any reports to the department.

No information collected as part of this study will be used for any compliance or regulatory purposes.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?

You will be asked to fill in an online survey regarding your organisation's use of the ASK-YP [Children's Safety] and Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys. The questions will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Questions will be asked using either a set response scale (e.g., rating the degree to which you agree/disagree to a statement, using a 4-point or 10-point scale) or using a short free-text format. The survey can be completed on a computer or other digital device.

It is important that you have been able to access the dashboard for both the Children's Safety [formerly the ASK-YP] and Safeguarding Capabilities Surveys to take part in this survey.

---

[4] Additional measures were added to the Australian Safe Kids and Young People (ASK-YP) survey. Therefore, it was renamed to the Children's Safety Study just after the Reflections Survey was circulated.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT?

As a worker in a youth-serving organisation, participation in this study is expected to give you an in-depth reflective account of what your organisation is doing well regarding the Standards, and what areas you may need to consider developing to better meet the Standards. To assist with this, you can choose to have your responses emailed to you, so you have a written record of your thoughts and reflections.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can stop answering questions at any time.

WILL ANYONE ELSE KNOW THE RESULTS OF THE PROJECT?

The results of this study will be published in academic journals using the data stored on a password protected server at ACU. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services will also receive a report with aggregate, non-identifiable responses (the department will **not** be provided with the name of your organisation) to support their review of the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Only aggregated data will be published, so your individual responses will not be identifiable.

WILL I BE ABLE TO FIND OUT THE RESULTS OF THE PROJECT?

At the conclusion of the project, a brief summary report will be available through the ACU Safeguarding Children and Young People Portal: https://safeguardingchildren.acu.edu.au/self-assessment.

WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT?

If you have any questions about the project, please contact the project team at ACU an at: safeguarding@acu.edu.au

WHAT IF I HAVE A COMPLAINT OR ANY CONCERNS?

The study has been reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (review number 2018-5H). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Manager of the Human Research Ethics Committee, care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research). Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

Manager, Ethics
c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
Australian Catholic University
North Sydney Campus
PO Box 968
North Sydney, NSW 2059
Ph: 02 9739 2519
Fax: 02 9739 2870
Email: resethics.manager@acu.edu.au

Yours sincerely

Prof. Daryl Higgins

INFORMED CONSENT

I have read and understood the information above. Any questions I have, have been sent to safeguarding@acu.edu.au and have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the 'Reflecting on our results' survey which takes up to 20 minutes to complete.

- I understand and agree that research data collected for this survey will be given in an aggregated form to the Victorian Department of Health and Human services and may be published or provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way or name my organisation.
- I agree that findings from the study may also be made publicly available in reports and journal articles in a form that does not identify me or my organisation in any way.
- I understand that I can choose to withdraw from the study but must do so within two weeks from the date of consenting to take part in the study by emailing safeguarding@acu.edu.au

○ Yes, I confirm the above and consent to taking part.

○ No, I do not consent and do not wish to take part.

Please write your organisation's name here: _____

What is your position in your organisation? _____

Do you have access to results from the survey(s) you took part in and have you seen the results?

○ Yes

○ No

This survey is designed to help you as you continue to develop and improve upon safeguarding practices in your organisation.

Many of the questions relate to your use of the Australian Safe Kids and Young People (ASK-YP) [now called Children's Safety] and Safeguarding Capabilities in Preventing Child Sexual Abuse (SCIPCSA) Surveys. These surveys, including this one, are not developed in a way that allows you to tick boxes but rather to promote reflection on the cultural change that the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Standards) may have promoted in your organisation.

By reflecting upon the concepts and results of the surveys, we hope that you will begin to identify what your organisation has done, or could do, in relation to each of the Standards to make your organisation a safer place for children, and consider how your collective actions as an organisation have supported cultural change in your organisation.

Completing this survey may lead you to reflect on your organisation and think that there is more your organisation needs to do to strengthen its child-safe culture. This may include specific actions to strengthen the understanding and implementation of the Standards, or you may consider that the Standards, or a particular child safe standard, hasn't helped you to shift culture as much as you would have liked. These reflections are just as important as the positive ones, and your ideas will help policy makers around Victoria, and nationally, as well as yourselves, to think about what can be done to make the Standards more effective in supporting cultural change.

Please use your dashboards to help you give specific examples in the answers you give to the questions and to help you use your results to reflect upon your journey of cultural change

1. What do you think it means for an organisation to have a child-safe culture?

    _____

    _____

2. Thinking about your idea of what it means for an organisation to have a child-safe culture, how do you think your organisation rates?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not child-safe at all									Extremely child-safe

2a. Please tell us why you gave your organisation this rating:

    _____

    _____

3. What do you think your organisation needs to do to improve its child-safe culture?

_____

_____

This next section asks you to reflect on the results from the two child-safe surveys that children and staff have completed about your organisation:

- The Australian Safe Kids and Young People Survey [now referred to as the Children's Safety Survey]
- The Safeguarding Capabilities in Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Survey

The following questions ask you to think about what the results of these surveys might tell you about the child-safe culture of your organisation.

4. What do the results of the two child-safe surveys listed above reveal about how well your organisation has implemented the Standards?

Please list your reflections about:

- how well your organisation has implemented each standard
- what the possible reasons are why your organisation may or may not be meeting a particular standard.

Standard 1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.

_____

_____

Standard 2. A child-safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.

_____

_____

Standard 3. A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

_____

_____

Standard 4. Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

_____

_____

Standard 5. Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

_____

_____

_____

Standard 6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

_____

_____

Standard 7. Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

_____

_____

5. Have the Child Safe Standards helped your organisation to develop a child-safe culture?

⭘ Yes

⭘ No

5a. How have the Standards helped your organisation to develop a child-safe culture?

_____

_____

5b. Why do you think that the Standards have **not** helped your organisation to develop a child-safe culture?

_____

_____

6. Which of the following areas (if any) do you feel have not been supported by the Standards?

	Identifying risks of abuse
	Responding to claims of abuse
	Identifying training needs and implementing a variety of HR policies and procedures including recruitment and selection processes, supervision, training and managing the performance of staff and volunteers
	Developing child-safe policies and procedures including a risk management approach that considers physical and online environments
	Recognising and responding to the diverse needs of children in your organisation
	Embedding child safety into the leadership activities of your organisation at all levels of your organisation
	Encouraging children to contribute to child safety in your organisation

7. Do you agree or disagree that the Child Safe Standards support your organisation to create a safe environment for:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Aboriginal children?	○	○	○	○	○
Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) children?	○	○	○	○	○
Children with a disability?	○	○	○	○	○

8. What might support your organisation to better promote the safety of these groups (Aboriginal, CALD, children with a disability)?

(Please specify which group you are making suggestions for, or indicate it is about all three groups)

_____

_____

9. The Victorian Child Safe Standards recognise that while all children are vulnerable, three specific groups of children are more vulnerable than others (Aboriginal, CALD, children with a disability). Are there any *other* groups of children or young people that your organisation considers to have vulnerabilities that should be incorporated specifically into the Child Safe Standards?

_____

_____

10. Overall, reflecting on your organisation's results from the two child-safe surveys, what does your organisation need to do to create or improve its child-safe culture?

_____

_____

11. Now that you have fully reflected on your organisation's survey results, and answered the questions in this Reflections Survey, we would like you to rate your organisation again, in terms of how child-safe you believe it is, using the same scale you used at the beginning of the survey

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not child-safe at all									Extremely child-safe

12. Please tell us why you gave your organisation that rating. If it has changed from your earlier response, what caused you to change your answer?

_____

_____

13. How helpful has completing this 'Reflections Survey' been in assisting you to assess your organisation's performance against the Standards?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all helpful									Extremely helpful

14. Finally, what, if anything, will you action in relation to the child-safe culture at your organisation as a result of completing this Reflections Survey? Please describe.

_____

_____