

Information sheet 6

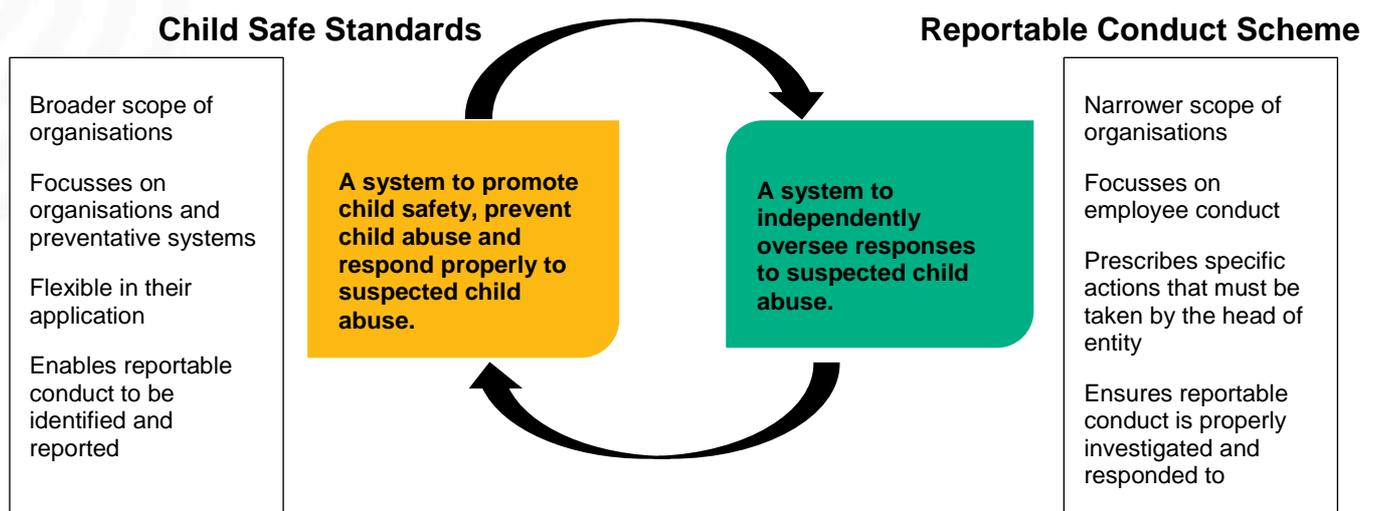
Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme

How Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme work together to keep children safe from abuse

In 2012, the Victorian Government initiated an inquiry into the handling of child abuse allegations within religious and other non-government organisations. The *Betrayal of Trust* Report, which detailed the inquiry findings, was tabled in parliament in 2013.

The *Betrayal of Trust* Report made a range of recommendations, including the need to better protect children from child abuse when they access services provided by organisations. Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme are part of the Victorian Government's commitment to implementing these recommendations.

Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme create distinct sets of responsibilities for organisations, but have been designed to complement one another. Together, Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme strengthen the capacity of organisations to prevent and respond properly to allegations of child abuse.



The Commission for Children and Young People has oversight and regulatory responsibility for both Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Where organisations have an existing funding and/or regulatory relationship with the Victorian Government or statutory bodies, the Commission will work collaboratively with and through these bodies. The Commission will work closely with those sectors not currently subject to regulation.

Child Safe Standards

Child Safe Standards focus on organisations and what they do to promote child safety, prevent child abuse and respond to suspected child abuse. They apply to a broad range of organisations and businesses that provide services to children, or engage children to produce goods or services. The standards provide a framework for

organisations to develop policies, procedures and strategies that embed a culture of child safety into everyday thinking and practice, and reduce the risk of child abuse being perpetrated by an employee, volunteer or contactor. They are flexible, allowing organisations to develop an approach to compliance that is relevant and sustainable. The Commission is able to monitor and enforce compliance with the standards.

There are seven standards and three principles that organisations must considered.



The Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is focussed on worker and volunteer conduct and how organisations investigate and respond to suspected child abuse. The scheme aims to improve organisational responses to suspected child abuse and to facilitate the identification of individuals who pose a risk of harm to children, but do not have a criminal record.

The scheme applies to some organisations required to meet the Child Safe Standards – those with a high level of responsibility for children – and sets out specific obligations for the heads of these organisations.

The head of the organisation must ensure that there are systems in place that:

- prevent reportable conduct from being committed
- enable reportable allegations to be made to the head of the organisation
- enable reportable allegations that involve the head of the organisation to be reported to the Commission.

Adopting a continuous improvement approach to keeping children safe from child abuse

An allegation of reportable conduct may reveal information about the effectiveness of the systems used by an organisation to prevent child abuse and respond to allegations of child abuse. This information can be used to improve your systems and better protect children from child abuse.

Where to get help

Organisations covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme should contact the Commission for clarification and guidance, and to talk through any issues of concern.

- Telephone: 8601 5281
- Email: childsafestandards@ccyp.vic.gov.au

Further information is also available on the Commission for Children and Young People's website at www.ccyp.vic.gov.au