

Child Safe Standard Four

Screening, Supervision, Training and other Human Resources Practices

Child Safe Standard Four requires organisations that provide services for children to have adequate screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

Though all members have a responsibility to be aware of, and to adhere to <The Practice's> Child Safe Policy, the Leadership team and the Child Safety Officer (CSO) will have key responsibility in ensuring that the standards are implemented at all times and that the standards are considered in all future planning.

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will foster a culture of openness and inclusiveness, and will be aware that people who may wish to harm children could target specific organisations. Robust human resources practices are a good way of reducing these risks. Human resources practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel.

To achieve this, our organisation will provide opportunities for employees and volunteers to develop and maintain skills to ensure child safety. Our Leadership team and Child Safety Officer will support staff and volunteers to understand the importance of child safety and wellbeing, and enable them to consistently follow child safety policies and procedures. We will reinforce our organisation's commitment to child safety by recognising the good work and practices of employees and volunteers in keeping children safe and protected.

Promoting a commitment to child safety

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will use our Child Safe Policy (and Statement of Commitment to Child Safety) as a communication tool to let people know that our organisation takes child safety seriously. We will talk about child safety regularly and have visible messages and reminders around the premises to help remind staff and those using the facility of our commitment to child safety.

Job advertisements will detail mandatory requirements, background and screening procedures. This will establish at the outset the commitment of our organisation to child safety for all new recruits. An example of an appropriate job advertisement is:

Our speech pathology practice is seeking a dynamic, experienced speech pathologist. At <Practice Name> we are committed to excellence in service provision and to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children.

The application form can be accessed at our website and will need to include three referees.

All applicants must hold a degree in Speech Pathology, hold membership with Speech Pathology Australia and provide referees who can comment on clinical experience.

A valid Working with Children Check and a Victorian Police Check are mandatory.

We are a child safe and equal employment opportunity employer. Applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and from people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

We will ensure that any roles on offer in our organisation have a position description attached to them, which will clearly detail the responsibilities involved in performing the role. Position descriptions are valuable because they inform staff and volunteers and help to uphold <The Practice's> commitment to child safety.

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Robust recruitment practices

Maintaining and reviewing policies and procedures will help Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd to ensure that it employs appropriate people within the organisation.

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will:

- offer key selection criteria when recruiting, including for volunteers
- consider why a particular person wants to work with children, their values and attitudes, their understanding of children's rights and needs, and what keeps children safe.
- screen potential staff and volunteers (to identify and avoid recruiting people who are not suitable to work with children) through a Working with Children Check, police checks, referee checks and identity checks
- speak with at least two referees of any potential staff member or volunteer, including the applicant's current or most recent direct supervisor.

High quality supervision and professional development

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will provide a positive, supportive working environment that will allow staff and volunteers to perform to the best of their ability and to provide a safe environment for children.

This will include:

- induction for new staff and volunteers, including discussion about child safety and the code of conduct
- formal and informal supervision and mentoring
- training opportunities.

From 1 Jan 2017, all staff members and volunteers at Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will be required to attend or watch an information session that outlines the expectations and responsibilities in relation to the Child Safe Standards. Staff and volunteers should read the Code of Conduct, seek clarification if unsure of anything in the Code, sign two copies and return one signed copy to the Child Safety Officer at Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd. For new staff and volunteers, this should occur at the commencement of employment/placement.

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd outlines the specific requirements for various positions within our organisation in regards to the Child Safe Policy, as follows:

Staff members must:

- Hold a valid Working With Children Check
- Have a current Victorian Police Check
- Maintain Speech Pathology Australia membership (not applicable to volunteers unless they are speech pathologists)
- Hold 'Certified Practising Speech Pathologist' status (not applicable to volunteers unless they are speech pathologists)

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- Meet the description and requirements outlined in <The Practice's> Position Description
- Sign <The Practice's> Code of Conduct
- Participate in clinic-based training in child safe policies and procedures and maintain updates every two years or as needed
- Participate in supervision, as agreed, in a manner that improves accountability and performance in relation to upholding <The Practice's> child safe framework
- Understand the Child Safe reporting flowchart
- Acknowledge they have read and understand <The Practice's> Child Safe Policy.

Child Safety Officer (additional duties and expectations to above):

- Will be provided with a position description (see sample attached in Standard 4)
- Is the key person for the implementation of the Child Safe Standards and must liaise with Leadership and be responsible for <The Practice's> Child Safe Policy and ensure it is followed by all staff and volunteers.
- Will be the designated person to hear or be informed about all allegations and concerns
- Will provide support to individuals who disclose information or are involved in a situation of abuse
- Will prioritise child safety within our organisation
- Must ensure that all record keeping and investigations are done promptly and efficiently, and are reported and concluded within an adequate time frame
- Will provide advice to anyone seeking information about the child safe standards or support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children associated with our clinic.

In summary, Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd is committed to the following actions in ensuring a child safe environment:

- **Developing clear job descriptions** that clarify the role, responsibilities and expectations of the position and outline reporting lines.
- **Developing Key Selection Criteria** that helps to identify key skills, attributes, experience and qualifications.
- **Advertising the position** and promoting the fact that Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd is a child safe organisation with a Child Safe Policy.
- **Interviewing applicants** and asking applicants about their motivation to work with children, their approach to aboriginal cultural safety and inclusive practices for children and their families.
- **Conducting a minimum of two reference checks** via telephone or in person.
- **Conducting identity checks**, including sighting an original birth certificate, a driver's licence or passport, and an original copy of qualifications.

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- **Conducting a police check and ensuring that applicants have a Working With Children Check** (unless they are exempt).
- **Providing supervision, support and monitoring of staff and volunteers.**
- **Monitoring and reviewing**, including checking that WWCC and police checks are still valid.