# Reviewed: Month/Year Next Review: Month/Year

# Guidance for Child Safety Officers

Schools can nominate a senior staff member as a child safety champion to support child safety. In large or multi-campus schools, more than one child safety champion can be nominated.

Child safety champions must have the status and authority to work with and influence others.

The role:

* requires knowledge and professional judgement on child safety and wellbeing
* needs support through ongoing training and mentoring
* may be a suitable development opportunity for aspiring school leaders.

## Key responsibilities

Child safety champions work with the school leadership team, teachers, students, volunteers and the school community to create a child safe environment in the school.

### Promote child safety culture

* Promote child safety and wellbeing. For example, at staff and parent meetings, through newsletters and staff bulletins.
* Ensure the school’s child safety policies and procedures:
  + are current and fit for purpose
  + are publicly accessible
  + are known and implemented.
* Promote a culture of listening to students and families and acting on their child safety concerns.
* Support staff and volunteers to focus on the child safety needs of vulnerable students.

### Provide support and guidance

* Be a point of contact for child safety concerns for staff, volunteers and students.
* Provide guidance to students, staff and volunteers on child safety policies and procedures.
* Work with school leadership to respond to child safety incidents.
* Maintain current skills and knowledge to support child safety and wellbeing, including:
  + child-focused complaint processes, reporting obligations and the [Four Critical Actions](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/FourCriticalActions_ChildAbuse.pdf)
  + student rights, participation and empowerment
  + Aboriginal cultural safety and inclusive practices to meet students diverse needs
  + child safety risk management including online safety
  + child safety information sharing and record-keeping obligations
  + working with relevant agencies to refer students and families to appropriate support
  + keeping across emerging research and best practice guidance in child safety and wellbeing.

### Train and educate

* Provide child safety induction programs for new school staff, volunteers and school council members.
* Provide child safety training for school staff, volunteers and school council members.
* Ensure mandatory reporters complete the annual mandatory reporting training.
* Provide child safety updates and information to staff and volunteers, as needed.

### Monitor, review and report

* Record child safety complaints and concerns, and analyse trends as needed
* Coordinate reviews following significant safety incidents and recommend improvements
* Maintain the school's child safety risk register with the school leadership team
* Coordinate child safety policy and practice reviews in consultation with the school community
* Maintain detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals

## Further resources

* [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the child safe standards – managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises](https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/Documents/MinOrder1359childsafe.pdf)
* [PROTECT guidance, resources and templates](https://www.vic.gov.au/protect)
* Child Safe Standards Action List
* [Four Critical Actions for responding to all forms of abuse](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/report.aspx)
* [Mandatory reporting eLearning modules](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/online-learning-for-schools.aspx)
* Policies, procedures and guidelines:
* *Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes*
* *Family Violence Support*
* *Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations*
* *Reportable Conduct*
* *Requests for Information about Students*
* *Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors*
* *Visitors in Schools*
* Volunteers in Schools.