

1. What is the Child Safe Policy?

The Child Safe Policy includes principles and procedures to guide child safety in youth projects operated by Lions Australia, (Multiple District 201 of Lions Clubs International). The policy covers procedures for the Lions Youth of the Year Project, Leo of the Year and the Youth Exchange Program. It also includes information about how to manage Child Safety complaints.

2. Does it apply to every Lions Youth project in Australia and Papua New Guinea?

Section 3 of the policy describes its scope. Lions Australia only controls a limited number of Youth projects, that is, those adopted at Convention or managed by a Multiple District Committee and this policy applies to those programs only.

The principles of the policy though can be applied to any youth project operated by a Lions Club or District and the Multiple District strongly recommends Lions Clubs and Districts to adopt these principles in their own policy to apply to their own youth projects.

3. Does a club have to adopt this policy?

Child safety is regulated by State government. Each State has its own legislation that covers 'working with young people' and this generally applies to Lions Clubs and Districts who operate youth projects. The Lions Australia Child Safe policy provides guidance as to the general principles of managing child safety, but each Lions Club and District needs to review the legislation in their state and ensure that they meet its requirements.

Links to the Child Safety authorities in your state can be found at the end of this FAQ.

4. Should everyone in my club obtain a 'Working with Children Check'?

Even though in most jurisdictions the legislation varies as to whom/when a 'Working with Children Check' is needed, it is MD201 policy that any member or volunteer directly involved in any youth program obtains a Working with Children Check (or the equivalent in their State).

Multiple District encourages Clubs that operate youth programs or activities involving young people to have all its members obtain a Working with Children Check. This is because any Lion in your club may be called upon to support these programs from time to time. Unlike other organisations, Lions tend to participate flexibly in all club programs depending on their availability.

If your club does not wish to apply this policy to all members, it is essential that you control participation in youth projects to exclude those members that do not hold a valid working-with-children-check or equivalent.

5. What exactly is the role of a Youth Support Officer?

One of the key protective factors for young people at risk of abuse, is having someone they can talk to and receive help. Although there are often many people involved in the youth programs, they can be busy with the operational tasks. A Youth Support Officer is a club member with personal qualities of being caring, open to communication and available. When young people are introduced to Lions programs like Youth Exchange, they should be introduced to the nominated 'youth support officer' and provide contact details. They should be invited to contact this person any time with concerns and worries.

6. Can the 'Club Child Safety Officer' be the 'Youth Support Officer'? This is a matter for each club to determine. The key requirement for a 'Youth Support Officer' is that they are available, so for a busy club running many youth programs, it may be better to have a separate role. But if you only have limited programs, they may be combined. It is most important that young people in your care have different options for support if they have problems.

7. What if the State authority conducting the Working with Children Check (WWCC) won't process my application?

Some state legislation is very prescriptive on when a WWCC is needed. E.g.: Home hosting of more than 3 weeks. Lions Australia chooses to be proactive in ensuring that all members working with children have a clearance. If your State authority will not process the check, please document this in writing. Your club should consider if there are any other 'risk management' measures it should take.

8. What "Child Safety Awareness Training" is available for Lions Clubs?

Awareness training and ongoing education around child safety is a requirement under the National Principles of a Child Safe Organisation.

Lions Clubs engaged in working with children must as a minimum

- Ensure members (and its volunteers) read and become familiar with the Child Safe Policy and procedures, and
- Discuss the policy and procedure at a Club meeting.
- Minutes of the meeting where the Child Safe Policy has been reviewed should be kept, documenting the names of attendees

Multiple District encourages its members working with children to source other training to supplement this policy. A series of webinars focusing on the three MD Youth Programs is available on the Lions Australia YouTube channel on the [Club Resource Playlist](#). The availability of other community-based training can be sourced through government child safety regulation websites. Please refer to the [Lions Australia Child Safe Policy Resources](#) web page for more information.

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9. Where do I find the Child Safety/Protection resources in my State?

- ACT - https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1804/~/working-with-vulnerable-people-%28wwvp%29-registration
- Northern Territory - <https://nt.gov.au/emergency/community-safety/apply-for-a-working-with-children-clearance>
- NSW - <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/>
- Queensland - <https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au>
- South Australia - <https://screening.sa.gov.au/>
- Tasmania - <https://www.cbos.tas.gov.au/topics/licensing-and-registration/registrations/work-with-vulnerable-people/do-i-need-to-register>
- Victoria - <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>
- Western Australia - <https://workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/>