

Attachment 11.1

Motion to adopt the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Purpose:

All YMCAs provide programs and services for children, young people and their families.

A child-safe organisation acknowledges that safety does not just happen. It requires conscious action to protect children from harm.

Having a Member agreed child protection policy is an important addition to the Movement's operational and cultural framework.

Current legislation and regulated industry practice in the area of child protection is limited and varies across Australia and it is therefore important that YMCA has a consistent national position on child protection.

Resolution: 2014-7:

That the National Council of YMCA's of Australia adopt the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy as circulated as Attachment 11.1A of this agenda.

Links to strategic plan:

Strengthen our Movement: This policy sets out clear guidelines under which all YMCA can be child safe, a foremost principle to providing services to community.

Inspire our people: This policy contributes to ensuring our people can work within an environment which is child safe and where staff and volunteers have every opportunity to foster a child safe environment.

Build our Brand: Our Brand is built upon our values and parents and other stakeholders rely on all YMCAs being child safe.

Background:

The National Board, at its meeting of 25th May 2014, endorsed the following two documents for consultation with the Movement:

1. YMCA Safeguarding Children and young People Policy – National Child Protection Policy
2. YMCA Safeguarding Children and Young People – National Child Protection Licensing Standards.

Both drafts were written by a specialist writing group and have been informed by a review of research, professional experience and current industry literature, policy and process. Other organisations policy and practice have been reviewed as has emerging theory in the area of child protective practice.

The policy has undergone extensive consultation with the Movement and YMCA Australia and the writing group have incorporated this feedback into the current draft.

Below are the links to the consultation drafts and feedback.

Links to supporting documents:

[Best Practice Policy template 2012](#)
[Policy Draft June 2014](#)
[Consultation feedback 28/08/2014](#)
[Policy Draft September 2014](#)
[Consultation feedback 27/10/2014](#)

Reasons for the change:

There is a strong drive within Australia for organisations to strengthen their child protective practices.

The interim report released on the 30th June 2014 by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse ([link here](#)) highlights areas of activity that are critical to preventing child sexual abuse in an organisational setting.

The YMCA has also drawn on learnings from:

- Consideration of the findings from the Royal Commission into Case Study 2, “The Response of YMCA NSW to the conduct of Jonathon Lord”
- A desk top audit of YMCA’s practices and policies conducted by the National Board in October 2013
- Membership Review findings
- Outcomes of a risk assessment conducted by the National Board in January 2014.

This new policy incorporates consideration of the above as well as the work of Professor Smallbone, the Australian Childhood Foundation and research into the emerging work of the Royal Commission’s findings.