



We build strong **PEOPLE**
strong **FAMILIES** strong **COMMUNITIES**



**YMCA CHILD PROTECTION
- SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE**

**- NATIONAL POLICY & ACCREDITATION
MODEL PROPOSAL -**

Prepared for:

**National Leadership Team (NLT)
&
YMCA Australia Board**

April 2011

**NATIONAL POLICY &
ACCREDITATION MODEL PROPOSAL**

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NATIONAL POLICY & ACCREDITATION MODEL PROPOSAL

Introduction

“In our society every child and young person deserves the right to thrive, learn and grow, be respected and valued and to enable to become an effective adult member of the community”.

The YMCA has developed a strong culture and commitment of protecting children and young people from abuse. The national accreditation model of the Safeguarding Children program developed by the Australian Childhood Foundation supports the YMCA commitment and capability to deliver on its promise to “Protect Children and Young People from harm and to ensure that any incidents of suspected child abuse are promptly and appropriately dealt with.”

Each Association is bound by the YMCA Licensing Standards to have an endorsed and fully implemented Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy (Child Protection Policy). It was also overwhelmingly supported at the 2006 National Convention that the YMCA be externally accredited in the area of Child Protection. The current national working group endorses the external accreditation philosophy due to the expertise and support it brings to our Organisation.

Background

Since 2009, the following has been reported on the YMCA’s online incident management system.

There have been:

- 90 incidents relating to child protection from 8 different Associations
- 55 of those incidents were also reported to Police and/or the Child Protection Agency
- 4 staff have been dismissed due to inappropriate behaviour with children and have been reported to Police
- 4 people have disclosed historic abuse that occurred 20-30 years ago within a YMCA facility
- Assistance and support has been sourced for families whose children have been showing inappropriate sexual behaviours.

In December 2010, the national Children’s Services Specialists met to review the child protection policy and accreditation model. The Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) was also asked to present at this meeting. A specialist working group was established from this meeting and met in March 2011 to work through the amendments to the policy and the accreditation model.

Consensus was reached at these meetings that a partnership with the ACF inclusive of accreditation to the Safeguarding Children's Program. It was deemed that this was the best way to maximise:

- the YMCA's commitment to child protection
- training for staff in this area
- support for staff and families in response to allegations or concerns in relation to child or young people's safety
- specialist knowledge in a very specialised area; and
- the YMCA's ability to reduce risk in this area.

Note: There are currently no other organisations that nationally support a child protection program within an organisational context. There are some organisations who offer support and training programs but the ACF's Safeguarding Children Program has been recognised as having the right context and content for the YMCA's needs.

Current Progress

The national working group have reviewed the current national Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy template.

The policy has been rewritten to incorporate changes to legislation and revamped to incorporate a suite of policies that support the SC&YP policy and required changes to the regulatory environment of our children's services program provision.

Link here to redrafted policies: (will be available 22/4/11)

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Guidance
- Mandatory Reporting
- Memberships, Enrolments & Facility Hire
- Recruitment.

Accreditation Proposal

Due to the current lapse of accreditation for all Associations, the following proposal has been developed.

The ACF is willing to accredit the YMCA as an organisation nationally via the commitments below:

YMCA's Commitment

It will be the Associations' duty to:

- Adhere to the standards within the ACF's Safeguarding Children Program.
- Make the Association available for an audit every 3 years by the ACF.
- Adhere to, as a minimum, the suite of template policies incorporated within the YMCA's SC&YP.
- Adhere to a yearly self audit program that will be submitted as part of the YMCA Australia compliance system.
- Maintain membership with the ACF via the accreditation fee.

ACF's Commitment

- Have a dedicated ACF staff member as a point of contact for the YMCA.
- To coordinate and manage a 3 year audit program of all YMCA Associations.
- Help support and advise the implementation of child protection policies and procedures to meet the standards of Safeguarding Children accreditation.
- The YMCA will have full access for all staff to the online training that has been developed by the ACF for the Safeguarding Children Program.
- The ACF will run tailored training to Boards, CEOs, HR and Senior Managers. Further training for operational employees and volunteers can be negotiated.
- A YMCA's members portal will be established on the Safeguarding Children website.
- Associations will directly receive regular updates about changes to legislative, policy and practice development nationally and internationally in relation to protecting children and young people in an organisation.
- The YMCA will have access to responsive debriefing service following a child protection critical incident.
- Advice will be available about how to respond to allegations and situation of concern in relation to children and young people.

[Link here](#) for the full version of the ACF's Safeguarding Children information booklet.

More information available at <http://www.safeguardingchildren.com.au/>.

Proposal Accreditation Fees

The ACF has reviewed the YMCA's operational scale nationally, inclusive of number of sites, staffing numbers and the complexity of the programs and services we operate. The entire cost of the audit program, inclusive of the benefits listed above has been quoted at \$120,000 per annum.

The accreditation fee model shown below, has been based on a formula that takes into account the number of sites the Association operates and the turnover of the Association. Turnover and number of sites have been given an equal weighting of 50% each toward the total.

It is believed that the number of sites and turnover is reflective of the:

- number of children and young people that are associated with the Association.
- number of staff and volunteers that will need to be trained and adhere to the policy.
- complexity of program provision in the area of child safety/protection.

The following ACF accreditation fees will be required by each Association annually:

Association	Number of Sites*	Estimated Turnover* (\$ Million)	ACF Annual Accreditation Fee
Ararat	17	\$1.5	\$1961
Ballarat	57	\$8.1	\$7178
Bendigo	30	\$5.4	\$4001
Brisbane	37	\$21.	\$7748
Bundaberg	4	\$3.8	\$1138
Cairns	4	\$1.2	\$627
Canberra	31	\$8.1	\$4629
Central Australia	3	\$3.0	\$882
Eastern Goldfields	1	\$1.3	\$353
Echuca	13	\$2.8	\$1824
Gayndah	1	\$0.025	\$103
Geelong	8	\$2.0	\$1176
Great Lakes	3	\$1.4	\$569
Hobart	4	\$1.9	\$765
Inner North East Adelaide	2	\$0.80	\$353
Katherine	2	\$1.0	\$392
Lake Macquarie	5	\$0.7	\$627
Launceston	1	\$0.4	\$176

Association	Number of Sites*	Estimated Turnover* (\$ Million)	ACF Annual Accreditation Fee
Manningham	2	\$5.3	\$1236
Perth	52	\$31.2	\$11221
Portland	4	\$1.5	\$686
Queanbeyan	4	\$1.1	\$608
South Australia	23	\$8.6	\$3942
Stanthorpe	3	\$0.40	\$372
Sydney	128	\$43.5	\$21086
Top End	13	\$7.5	\$2746
Victoria	153	\$138.0	\$42083
Whittlesea	7	\$4.2	\$1510
National Total	612	\$305.7	\$120,000

* Figures derived from current insurance data

NOTE: YMCA Australia has committed a \$20,000 reserve fund per annum. This will be made available to support ACF accreditation fees for Associations who are having financial hardship in accommodating this cost.

Proposed Timeline for Implementation

April 2011
Updated Policy drafts will be finalised and circulated to Associations for comment.
May 2011
Template Policies to be presented to National Board for endorsement.
Template policies to be endorsed by the National Board as a YMCA Licensing Standard.
June 2011
The YMCA and ACF will develop the audit schedule.
Three (3) pilot Associations will be requested to participate in an audit between October-December 2011.
July 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation fees to be paid to the ACF (<i>YMCA Australia to administer</i>). • Proposed 3 year audit schedule to be circulated to Associations. • Access for all YMCA staff to the ACF's online training to commence. • Proposed calendar for the tailored training to Boards, CEOs, HR and Senior Managers be circulated. • YMCA's access to its ACF members portal to be made available. • Regular updates about changes to legislative, policy and practice development nationally and internationally in relation to protecting children and young people in an organisation to be circulated via YMCA Australia Update. • Debriefing services from the ACF will become available. • Advice to Associations in regards to responding to allegations and situation of concern in relation to children and young people by the ACF to become available.
October to December 2011
Pilot accreditation audits will occur.
Association Boards to endorse new suite of policies that meet the YMCA Licensing Standard.
January 2012
Audit program will commence in full.

YMCA Safeguarding Children Program: Accreditation-audit steps

The following steps are aimed at providing YMCA Associations with a guide to the preparation and formal steps of the SCP accreditation. The steps are a guide and the Associations are advised that in accordance with YMCA Australia's directions, they may liaise directly with Australian Childhood Foundation around relevant aspects of the accreditation process. ACF understands that Associations have an imperative to reflect their local service need and service delivery. Accordingly ACF is able to be flexible in working with each Association to their requirements as long as they meet the compliance requirements set out by the SCP accreditation Standards and any policy and licensing requirements set out by YMCA Australia.

Steps

1. Each Association conducts a self-assessment against the self-assessment document.

This is to alert the Association to all possible requirements against each the 7 accreditation standards. The self-assessment then defines the specific audit focus for that Association.

It is important to understand that the self-assessment is deliberately comprehensive and Associations are able to be selective in terms of those aspects that apply, or don't apply to the Associations operations and areas of risk. Associations should not feel compelled to meet requirements that do not apply to their Association's circumstances, however they do need to be confident that they have covered all areas of risk relevant to their services.

2. Associations submit policies and procedural documents at least 2 weeks prior to audit. This will allow for desk top audit and any discussions and amendments as necessary.

As each Association is part of the affiliated National YMCA structure and are at liberty to present the National safeguarding children and young people policy and procedural documents. However, Associations must identify any changes or amendments to the National policies made to reflect their particular local or specific service needs.

3. Associations should submit an organizational chart that outlines the personnel structure for all included children and young people programs and services.

4. Association Boards are asked to specify how they will communicate safeguarding children and young people policies and expectations to all personnel.
5. Association Boards are asked to define how safeguarding children and young people policies and procedures will be implemented, monitored and reviewed for the purposes of continuous improvements to safeguarding approaches.
6. Associations are asked to ensure that at least 85% of all involved personnel have completed the standard SCP on-line training prior to audit. If 100% have not completed the training the Association is required to demonstrate a clear strategy to have all personnel trained within an agreed time frame along with procedure to ensure that all new personnel complete training within an agreed time from starting, for example at induction.
7. In addition to the on-line training, Associations are at liberty to negotiate specific training. This might include identified areas of difficulty, uncertainty or specific service need. For example, training for staff and managers in reporting suspected child abuse, or Board/CEO and managers in areas of Governance or Duty of Care.
8. Through-out the 3 year accreditation period, Associations have continuing access to the SCP on-line training for all new staff, plus relevant program and personnel support from ACF.
9. ACF can liaise with an identified person of contact from each Association to negotiate interviews with identified personnel along with site visits of audit.

Interviews are an important part of assessing how well the policies and practices are integrated into the Association's systems of service provision and organisational structures. A sample of personnel representing the Association's governance, management and service delivery will be identified for interview. Interviews can be as a group of personnel having common responsibilities, or as individuals. The interviews are conversational rather than interrogative and aimed at being non-threatening, usually lasting between 30 and 45 minutes. During site visits discussions of a general nature might often occur with personnel, participants or parents.

10. Refer to more detailed Roles and Responsibilities against Standards listed in YMCA National Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, attachments 6, 7 and 8.

11. Typically the following interviews are sought with:

- Chairperson and at least one Board of management member
- CEO and/or Deputy CEO
- Staff responsible for the administration of personnel records that includes the procedures for recording and monitoring of recruitment practices, Working With Children Checks and National Police Checks, and training.
- Program managers/supervisors or team leaders who have either a direct role or supervisory-decision making responsibility with children, young people and parents.
- Program personnel (employees/volunteers)
- Key stakeholders such as other service partners (eg co-located or co-facilitating organisations), parents, and participating young people and children. These interviews will be negotiated and conducted under strict conditions and agreement from all concerned. These can be conducted in a group or individual format.

12. Site visits, are negotiated with personnel involved and at suitable times.

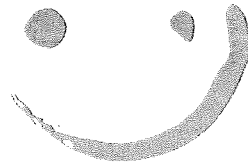
13. Feedback is provided at any time during the audit and formally by way of report within a reasonable time following audit.

See attached Audit Report document that outlines the format and objectives of the audit.

14. Generally the review-structure assesses that the safeguarding children and young people systems are in place against each of the 7 standards by considering:

- Relevant documents, policies and procedures
- Identified persons and responsibilities for systems management including communication, implementation, monitoring and review processes
- Evidence of the relevant policies and procedures in practice
- That the systems are appropriately monitored and reviewed
- The systems are complimentary and appropriately meet the risks associated with the Association's program and services
- That service users and service partners have access to relevant safeguarding children documentation, resources and information.

15. Associations are invited to nominate an organizational point of reference who can liaise with ACF at any point before, during or after the audit and throughout the accreditation processes.



Australian
Childhood Foundation
Protecting Children

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PROGRAM ACCREDITATION AUDIT REPORT

Name of Organisation

Date of Pre-Audit:

This review was conducted according to the requirements of the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) Accreditation Program for Safeguarding Children.

Contents

Scope of Assessment

This audit report represents a summary of findings from RMHC self assessment and documents provided relating to the seven accreditation standards:

- Commitment to safeguard children
 - Personnel roles and conduct
 - Recruitment and screening
 - Personnel induction and training
 - Involving children and parents
 - Child abuse reports and allegations
 - Supporting a child-safe culture
- desktop audit of relevant policies and supporting documentation
 - site inspection
 - direct interviews with a cross section of governance, senior management, program managers, program staff, volunteers , stakeholder, family or parent.

This report aims to assist the organisation in improving its systems for safeguarding children, through identifying key strengths relating to the 7 standards and opportunities for improvement. Relevant recommendations will be made to support the achievement of these identified opportunities for improvement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DISCLAIMER

A recommendation to ACF for accreditation certifies that the participating organisation has met the applicable standards and demonstrates a commitment to improving its systems for safeguarding children. It does not, however, guarantee the safety, quality or acceptability of a participating organisation or its services or programs, in safeguarding children. It is expected that accredited organizations will continue to monitor and improve, where possible, all safeguarding approaches and take all reasonable steps to prevent and/or manage abuse through-out the course of the accreditation period.

Standard 1

Commitment to safeguard children

Through its 'safeguarding children and young people' statement our organisation documents its clear commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect.

Accreditation requirement
1.1 Developing a 'safeguard children and young people' statement
1.2 Approving and endorsing your safeguarding children and young people' statement
1.3 Communicating your 'safeguarding children and young people' statement to 'involved' personnel

Key strengths

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Opportunities for improvement	Recommendations

This standard was

Standard 2

Personnel roles and conduct

Our organisation ensures that each person involved in our delivery of services to children and young people understands their role, and the behaviour we expect in safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect.

Accreditation requirement	
2.1	Communicating roles and responsibilities
2.2	Developing 'practice and behaviour' guidelines
2.3	Approving and endorsing your 'practice and behaviour' guidelines
2.4	Communicating your 'practice and behaviour' guidelines to 'involved' personnel
2.5	Reviewing your 'practice and behaviour' guidelines periodically

Key strengths

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Opportunities for improvement	Recommendations

This standard was

Standard 3

Recruitment and screening

Our organisation has appropriate measures in place to minimize the likelihood that we will recruit a person who is unsuitable to work with children and young people.

Accreditation requirement
3.1 Establishing and communicating recruitment procedures
3.2 Communicating to potential recruits
3.3 Holding interviews
3.4 Undertaking identity checks
3.5 Undertaking criminal record and working with children checks
3.6 Undertaking reference checks
3.7 Developing guidelines for volunteers, short-term appointees and minors
3.8 Reviewing recruitment procedures and resources

Key strengths

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Opportunities for improvement	Recommendations

This standard was

Standard 4

Personnel induction and training

Our organisation's induction, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect.

Accreditation requirement
4.1 Inducting new personnel
4.2 Undertaking Safeguarding Children training
4.3 Undertaking ongoing education and training

Key strengths

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Opportunities for improvement	Recommendations

This standard was

Standard 5

Involving children and parents

In developing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment our organisation involves, and communicates with, children and young people, and their parents. We encourage parental involvement and behaviour that helps to protect children and young people.

Accreditation requirement
5.1 Providing 'safeguarding children' statements
5.2 Providing 'practice and behaviour' guidelines
5.3 Providing 'guidelines for parents' statements
5.4 Providing 'child abuse reports and allegations' policy information
5.5 Overcoming communication barriers
5.6 Communicating a child's rights and responsibilities
5.7 Communicating with, and involving, parents

Key strengths

Opportunities for improvement	Recommendations

This standard was

Standard 6

Child abuse reports and allegations

Our organisation has measures in place to ensure that our 'involved' personnel understand their responsibility to report possible abuse or neglect of children or young people, and understand our reporting procedures.

Accreditation requirement
6.1 Developing a 'responding to child abuse reports and allegations' policy
6.2 Approving and endorsing your 'responding to child abuse reports and allegation's policy
6.3 Communicating your 'responding to children abuse reports and allegations' policy
6.4 Informing ACCYO
6.5 Reviewing, periodically, your 'responding to child abuse reports and allegations policy.

Key strengths

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Opportunities for improvement	Recommendations

This standard was

Standard 7

Supporting a child-safe culture

Our organisation is committed to maintaining and improving its policies, procedures and practices to safeguard children and young people from abuse and neglect.

Accreditation requirement
7.1 Appointing a program coordinator
7.2 Monitoring service delivery by personnel
7.3 Communicating with personnel
7.4 Disclosing convictions or charges
7.5 Undertaking periodic external checks
7.6 Undertaking reviews
7.7 Undertaking periodic self-assessments

Key strengths

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Opportunities for improvement	Recommendations

This standard was