



Practical guide to choosing, supervising and developing suitable staff and volunteers

Choosing safe staff and volunteers	Practical suggestions	Good outcomes
Determine if the role will have direct or indirect contact with children, or access to sensitive information about children and their families	<p>Assessing the type of contact the role will have with children, and what sort of access there will be to information about individual children, will determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the role legally requires a Working with Children Check, or a Working with Children Check is needed to reduce the risks to children • if other screening and checking is also needed • the type of training and level of supervision the role will require. 	The right level of background checks, training and supervision for the role are in place.
Develop a duty statement or job description	<p>A duty statement or job description clarifies the role, responsibilities and expectations of the position and outlines reporting lines.</p> <p>Determine if the position requires a Working with Children Check, professional registration or qualification.</p>	Recruitment of the most suitable staff or volunteers.
Develop key selection criteria	Selection criteria help to identify key skills, attributes and experience that are required to undertake the duties and tasks outlined in the duty statement.	Choosing the right person for the role will be easier if you think about what you need in advance.
Advertise the position	Promote that you are a child safe organisation with a Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.	Makes clear that child safety forms part of your organisation's culture and helps you attract people with the same values as the organisation.
Interview applicants	<p>Ask about the applicant's motivation to work with children.</p> <p>Ask questions about the applicant's real-life experience and their understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children's physical and emotional needs • professional boundaries • children's rights. 	A process that allows reasonable opportunity to assess an applicant's skills and suitability and that is fair.

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	<p>Explore with the applicant their values and if they align with a commitment to child safety and wellbeing and the prevention of child abuse and harm.</p> <p>Discuss the applicant's approach to Aboriginal cultural safety and inclusive practices for all children and their families.</p> <p>Useful questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please list your experiences (if any) working with children and young people, or with organisations that work with children and young people. This can be in your professional and personal life (including volunteer roles such as sporting roles). • Please give examples of what you would consider to be appropriate and inappropriate conduct between an adult and a child or young person. • What would you do if you thought a colleague was acting inappropriately with a child? • How would you describe your approach to engaging with children and young people? <p>Have more than one person on the selection panel so you can discuss views on the applicants. Have a mix of people with different characteristics and backgrounds on the panel if possible, such as a mix of genders. Including a young person on the panel can help you get a different perspective.</p> <p>Conduct a second interview if you are not sure which person you want to appoint or have some doubts about a candidate. You may want to have a more informal discussion in the second interview encouraging more free-flowing conversation and exchange of ideas so you can better get to know people.</p>	
<p>Conduct a minimum of two reference checks</p>	<p>At least two reference checks should be undertaken. Do not accept written references. You should always speak with the referee.</p> <p>Ask for at least one referee from the applicant's current or most recent employer.</p> <p>Referees need to have personally observed the applicant's work with children.</p> <p>Useful questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you observed the person interacting with children? Can you describe the types of relationships and interactions the person has had with children? • Would you employ the applicant again? • Do you have any concerns about the applicant working directly with children? 	<p>Collection of information about the candidate helps you make informed decisions about the applicant's suitability.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you comfortable knowing the applicant could sometimes be alone with children? • Can you give us an example of a time when you observed the applicant responding to a child's challenging behaviour? • Did you have any disciplinary matters relating to the person or concerns about their adherence to the organisation's Code of Conduct? 	
<p>Provide induction, supervision, support and monitoring of staff and volunteers</p>	<p>Familiarise new staff and volunteers with the organisation's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Code of Conduct and related policies and procedures.</p> <p>Provide ongoing training regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying and responding to signs of child abuse and harm • supporting someone making a disclosure about harm to a child • assessing and managing risks of child abuse and harm • empowerment and participation of children • record keeping and information sharing • child safe reporting and response obligations • cultural safety and inclusive practices. <p>Ongoing supervision and management of staff and volunteers must include a focus on child safety and wellbeing. This can be through regular staff supervision, professional development plans and staff forums and meetings.</p> <p>Action is taken if any staff or volunteers don't adhere to the organisation's Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct including raising it with the staff member or volunteer and checking that they change their behaviour.</p>	<p>Staff and volunteers understand how to keep children safe, prevent and minimise harm and can act confidently.</p>