



Child Safety Guidelines for Landcare

These guidelines are prepared for organisers of landcare events and activities. They are not mandatory and should be adapted to the relevant circumstances. However, any adaptation must continue to meet the requirements of the Child Safety Policy and any relevant legislation.

Three broad principles apply in all circumstances:

- Events should be planned and delivered to ensure child safety
- Child safety should be actively monitored during events and activities
- You must respond effectively to any report from children or adults of any incident or concern about child safety and report this as required by the Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct and/or the law.

Event Planning

In planning events and activities, organisers should explicitly consider child safety. Matters for consideration include:

- The purpose of the event and its suitability for children, either as a focus of the event or as incidental attendees
- The knowledge, capabilities and responsibilities of people leading and delivering the event – including ensuring that they are aware of the Landcare Victoria Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct
- How the event will be promoted, including information about attendance by children and their supervision arrangements
- The nature of the venue or site of the event and any special risks it might create for child safety
- Any special needs or characteristics of children attending the event, in particular any special vulnerability, and how this will be addressed
- Whether attendance by unsupervised children will be provided for at an event otherwise organised for adults, and how child safety will be ensured
- Ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements if the event is specifically organised for children (e.g. a Junior Landcare activity), including the requirement for a working with children check for all relevant adults

Event Management

At the event, organisers should:

- Include reference to child safety arrangements in event briefings – including a reminder to adults present about their obligations
- Be clear who is responsible for the safety of children at the event and communicate this to adults and children present

- Assess the site/premises for any risks of child abuse (for example obscured lines of site which might be common in bushland settings)
- Be aware of any children present, through observation and by recording their presence on the participant sign in sheet – include an ‘Under 18’ tick box and a requirement for parents/guardians to approve participation of their children
- Design and deliver activities in a way that mitigates the identified risks
- Maintain vigilance about the behaviour of children and adults and intervene and report as required
- Ensure that no child is alone with only one other person at any time other than their parent or designated carer
- Have clearly understood and communicated arrangements in place for supervision of any children attending alone
- If families are to bring children to activities, ensure that it is known in advance/on arrival that the parent or carer must be directly responsible for and always supervise their child
- Create and retain a record of attendance

Working with Children Checks

Landcare Victoria Inc. Member Groups when they organise events for children must ensure that all people involved in the event, including volunteers, hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this check or evidence that they are exempt.

There is no general requirement for people to hold a Working with Children check at landcare events where children attend incidentally and are under the supervision of their parents or a guardian. However, in all cases, Member Groups must ensure that the event is conducted in a way that is safe for children.

For more information, please refer to the Working with Children website:

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/>

Member Group Governance

It is good practice to include child safety as a standing item on committee agendas to ensure a continuing focus on the issue and to provide an opportunity for members to raise and resolve any points of concern.

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