



# Implementation of Recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

FOURTH ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

November 2021

**YSafeguarding**  
Feel Safe, Be Safe

the 

# Acknowledgment to Survivors

At the Y, we would like to pay our respects to all victims and survivors of abuse.

We would like to acknowledge the past failures to protect children and young people and the trauma that was inflicted upon the victims, survivors and their families, especially if they were under the Y's care.

The Y considers any form of child abuse to be intolerable and inexcusable under any circumstance.

We recognise the lifelong impact that child sexual abuse may have on the individuals, their families and communities.

We are committed to address and learn from the wrongs of the past and assure all survivors that suffered abuse that we are dedicated to doing everything we can to empower all children and young people to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.



# A message from our Presidents



The Y has been on a significant safeguarding journey dating back to 2009 when we first engaged the Australian Childhood Foundation to help us review our safeguarding practice.

We commit to continually putting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people above everything else we do and ensuring that all children and young people can feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.

Over the last 12 years, we have transformed our approach to safeguarding children and young people by creating and maintaining safe cultures, operations and environments at all of our Member Ys.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse handed down their final Report four years ago, outlining recommendations for organisations across Australia to improve their responses to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Since the Report, the Y has continued to set industry benchmarks in our safeguarding practice, of which we are pleased to share with you in this Progress Report.

We have learnt that we must always see the world through the eyes of children and young people and must intentionally put the needs of children and young people first, something we are very proud to acknowledge we are doing. We've also learnt that we must hear the voices of survivors of child abuse and enact their wishes to ensure no child or young person ever should experience any form of abuse.

We're also extremely proud of the progress we have made since last year's report to the Royal Commission.

This year we saw:

- ▶ our National Safeguarding Unit's transition to Y Safeguarding, the Y's first safeguarding charity with harm prevention status; and
- ▶ the development and implementation of our new Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards.

Childhood is a time to have fun, be carefree, splash around, play games - and we're working hard to make sure that the Y is a great place to enjoy being a child or young person.

We will continue to prioritise safeguarding at the Y to enable childhood to be enjoyed, as it should, in our programs and our communities.

**Ben Hubbard**  
President

Y Australia

**Chris Lewis**  
President

Y Safeguarding

# Our Commitment from our CEOs

All of the Ys in Australia are committed to ensuring all children and young people can feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.



**Ross Kyrwood**  
Y Australia



**Brooke LeSueur**  
Y Ballarat



**Alan Bray**  
Y Brisbane



**Greg McMahon**  
Y Bundaberg



**Torrien Lau**  
Y Canberra



**Shona Eland**  
Y Geelong



**Phil Venables**  
Y Hobart



**Colin Organ**  
Y Inner North-East  
Adelaide



**Susannah LeBron**  
Y New South Wales



**Matt Feutrill**  
Y Northern Territory



**Phil Doorgachurn**  
Y Safeguarding



**Donna McMaster**  
Y Services



**David Patterson**  
Y South Australia



**Carolyn Morris**  
Y Victoria



**Michele Rowse**  
Y Whittlesea



**Tim McDonald**  
Y Western Australia

# A Message from our Charity - Y Safeguarding



I am extremely proud of the progress of our Member Ys in empowering all children and young people to feel safe and be safe. The last year has been particularly challenging for a number of our Member Ys who have been shutdown due to Covid-19 restrictions.

However, these shutdowns have meant that many of our services have moved online to continue to give children and young people a place where they can feel safe, connected and continue with a sense of belonging at the Y.

In March this year, Y Safeguarding was born. Y Safeguarding is the Y's national safeguarding charity that has received Harm Prevention Status from the Department of Social Services. This is an extremely exciting time for the Y, as we continue our safeguarding journey to support even more children, young people, families and communities.

Over the last year Y Safeguarding has designed and published a suite of world-class resources that have supported our Member Ys and other organisations to keep children and young people safe.

With the very generous grant from the eSafety Commissioner, we developed our Stay Safe Online - Tell Someone Training. The online training is available in three modules: one for children, one for young people and one for families and communities. The training is completely free and is aimed to empower anyone who sees, hears or feels anything of concern online to tell someone, and who they can tell. I am also proud to announce that the Training won two Gold Awards at the LearnX event this year.

We also launched our Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards. The Standards were unanimously approved by all of our Member Ys at our Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) in March of this year. Our Member Ys are now working tirelessly to continue to meet these high Standards so that the Y can continue to be the safest place possible for children and young people.

I am excited to see what 2022 holds for children and young people and am very proud that the Y will continue to be an important part of children and young people's lives that empower them to feel safe and be safe. As we embark on our fundraising journey as a new Charity, I hope to partner with many organisations in our continued quest to empower all children and young people to feel safe and be safe.

**Phil Doorgachurn**  
**Y Safeguarding**

# The Y in Australia

Operating and responding to community needs for over 175 years, today the Y in Australia provides services over 22 million times to Australians each year, including 1.2 million engagements with young people across almost 600 sites, with 142 located in regional and rural areas.

The Y in Australia operates across all States and Territories delivering services to our local communities through Early Years, Out of School Hours Care, Sport, Recreation and Youth Programming.

As the oldest and one of the largest youth organisations in the world, founded in London in 1844, the Y has grown globally to reach over 60 million people a year across 120 countries, with nearly 90,000 staff, 920,000 volunteers and 12,000 branches worldwide.



# The Y in Australia (con't)

## Our Safeguarding Structure

At the Y, we have established a safeguarding structure that enables us to ensure all of our Member Ys have the safest culture, operations and environments that empower children and young people to feel safe and be safe.



# Our Safeguarding Framework

To achieve our Safeguarding Vision, we have developed our Safeguarding Framework. At the heart of our Safeguarding Framework is our Safeguarding Vision, to 'feel safe and be safe'.

Our Safeguarding Vision stands on three Pillars: Culture, Operations and Environment.

These Pillars are comprised of 15 elements that enable our Y People to understand how Safeguarding directly relates to their individual roles. The Elements in our Safeguarding Framework build upon the 10 National Child Safe Principles and provide our Member Ys with a clear model on how to embed Safeguarding. Our Framework was also created to help children, young people, families, and communities to know what they should expect from our Member Ys to ensure they can feel safe and be safe.



# Child Safety and wellbeing is embedded in the Y's leadership, governance and culture

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 1

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Transitioned our National Safeguarding Unit into its own harm prevention status charity now known as Y Safeguarding to deliver further support to our Member Ys, families and communities.
- ▶ Co-designed and published our Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards to ensure our Member Ys are held to the highest safeguarding standards.
- ▶ Re-engaged in a partnership agreement with the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) to review each of our Member Ys against our Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards.
- ▶ Began roll out of our new Safeguarding Review process in partnership with the ACF
- ▶ Supported our Member Ys to recruit a Board Safeguarding Sponsor to champion safeguarding from a strategic level.
- ▶ Supported our Member Ys to develop processes and structures to support Young People on our Boards.
- ▶ Empowered our Member Ys to develop and publish their Annual Safeguarding Action Plans that are endorsed by the relevant Board Sub-Committee.
- ▶ Developed national working relationships with NAPCAN, the eSafety Commissioner, AFL and GoodStart to provide support and learning across each organisation.
- ▶ Maintained our relationships with Families Australia, National Office for Child Safety, Australian Childhood Foundation, Gymnastics Australia, Swimming Australia and Sport Integrity Australia at a National Level; with our Member Ys maintaining relationships with local agencies and organisations to enhance the safety of children and young people.
- ▶ Collated and analysed national safeguarding case data to further support our Member Ys with preventative safeguarding measures.

### Our priorities for 2022:

1. **To have a young person on each of our Member Boards/Committees**
2. **To be thought leaders in safeguarding led from our national safeguarding charity - Y Safeguarding**
3. **To begin implementation of Tranches 2 and 3 of our Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards**

# Children and Young People are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 2

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Continued to embed our Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program across our range of services.
- ▶ Received funding from the eSafety Commissioner to co-designed and launch online training for children and young people.
- ▶ Launched our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Program. 92% of participants reported feeling safer following the training.
- ▶ Hosted our national Young Persons Consultative Group.
- ▶ Embedded young people into the design and decision-making process of the Y Australia Office.
- ▶ Designed and published our child and youth friendly versions of our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.
- ▶ Collaborated with our WhyNot Platform to hear from young people about their personal experiences in the online world.
- ▶ Embedded the voices of young people from our WhyNot platform into Board and operational meetings.
- ▶ Developed and published our Gender Diversity Safeguarding Guidance in consultation with young people.
- ▶ Delivered safeguarding training sessions to children and young people through our Member Y's programs such as Youth Parliament, Early Years and Out of School Hours Care.
- ▶ We listened to the voices of children and young people when designing our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Program
- ▶ We heard the views of children and young people across Australia whilst living through a Pandemic and what they wanted the Y to be for them in a post-Pandemic world.

### Our priorities for 2022:

- 1. To have a young person on each of our Member Boards/Committees**
- 2. Begin scoping our Child and Young Person Participation Framework in collaboration with the Australian Childhood Foundation**
- 3. Develop resources for our Member Ys to engage diverse and vulnerable children and young people**

*'I have the right to feel safe and be safe'*

Josh, aged 10 Out of School Hours participant , Y South Australia

# Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 3

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Engaged with families and community on the design of our service spaces.
  - ▶ Delivered the Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program to families and communities in our Early Years and Out of School Hours Care Programs.
  - ▶ Held information sessions for families and communities at our Member Y centres - for example in response to the Australian Human Rights Commission Report on gymnastics in Australia.
  - ▶ Involved families and communities in decision making on our programs, services and spaces at our Member Y centres.
  - ▶ Engaged with families and community on our National Gender Diversity Safeguarding Guidance.
  - ▶ Informed families and communities of our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy at enrolment and through Member Y newsletters.
- ▶ Reviewed our 'families and communities' section of our National Safeguarding Guidance.
  - ▶ Gave access to our Safeguarding Policies and Procedures on our National and Member Y websites.
  - ▶ Published our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Program for community, as well as translating the Program to Chinese as the second most spoken language in Australia.

### Our priorities for 2022:

1. **Develop and deliver education and training sessions for families on the Y's Safeguarding Framework.**
2. **Consider how we can further embed families and communities into the decision-making processes of our Member Ys.**
3. **Develop and deliver safeguarding education and training sessions for local communities through our Member Ys.**

*'I feel that this is an important topic - its something I am passionate about, and children should be given a voice... as Aboriginal people, children are our every thing, they carry our tradition, they are our future... I want to say thank you to the YMCA, this was a really cool opportunity'*

Allira Moore, Wodi Woman

# Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 4

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Consulted, designed and published our National Gender Diverse Safeguarding Guidance.
  - ▶ Engaged Minus18 to deliver LGBTIQ+ training to our Member Y Safeguarding Leads.
  - ▶ Maintained our YNSW Affinity Network to support LGBTIQ+ employees and volunteers.
  - ▶ Delivered anti-racism training to our CEOs.
  - ▶ Explored how the Y can be involved with Reconciliation Action Plans nationally and locally.
  - ▶ Delivered cultural awareness training at local Member Ys.
  - ▶ Maintained NDIS registration at our Bundaberg and Whittlesea Member Ys.
  - ▶ Empowered our National Office Staff to undertake the SBS Inclusion Program Training to enhance our collective knowledge on equity and diversity.
  - ▶ Updated our National Safeguarding Guidance section on Diversity.
- ▶ Translated our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Program into Simplified Chinese with the support of the eSafety Commissioner.
  - ▶ Continued to provide our Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program in a variety of languages.
  - ▶ Taught children and young people in our Early Years, Out of School Hours Care and Youth Programs about culture, diversity and inclusion.

### Our priorities for 2022:

- 1. Explore the opportunity of a National Diversity and Equity Policy.**
- 2. Develop training and education resources to support Member Ys when engaging with diverse groups.**
- 3. Further enhance our National Safeguarding Guidance to provide specific safeguarding issues facing diverse groups of children and young people.**

# People working with Children and Young People are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 5

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Maintained our strict recruitment protocols for all Y People including mandatory safeguarding questions at interview and reference check level as well as enhanced criminal record checks.
- ▶ Updated our safeguarding induction process to include our new online safeguarding training to further support our Y People to empower children and young people to feel safe and be safe.
- ▶ Updated our Recruitment and Contractor Risk Assessment Matrix to support our Member Ys with safe recruitment.
- ▶ Designed and published our Volunteer Matrix to support the safe recruitment of volunteers.
- ▶ Continued to host monthly Safeguarding Consultative Meetings with our Member Y Safeguarding Leads.
- ▶ Inducted new Y People with our Safeguarding Children and Young People Video.
- ▶ Ensured safeguarding wording remained within Position Descriptions.
- ▶ Provided template safeguarding questions that can be embedded into Annual Appraisal Processes to empower all our Y People to consider their contribution to safeguarding children and young people.
- ▶ Published our first National Safeguarding Online Training module for all new Y People.
- ▶ Engaged children and young people on the selection process for the recruitment of new Y People.

### Our priorities for 2022:

1. **Embed safeguarding questions within our Annual Appraisal Processes nationally and at our Member Ys.**
2. **Consider how children and young people can be engaged in the recruitment processes for new Y People.**
3. **Develop safer recruitment training modules to further upskill our recruiting managers.**

*'One of the best safeguarding sessions I have been to. I feel more empowered that I can make a difference and do all I can to ensure children and young people are safe'*

Y Canberra Region Employee - Safe Behaviours Pilot

# Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 6

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Reported all safeguarding concerns in line with relevant State and Territory Legislation.
  - ▶ Maintained our National online reporting portal for safeguarding concerns and complaints.
  - ▶ Remained as a full participating institution of the **National Redress Scheme**.
  - ▶ Reflected and embedded the learnings from the Australian Human Rights Commission review into Gymnastics Australia.
  - ▶ Continued to embed our Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program across our services to empower children, young people, families and Y People to tell someone if they have safeguarding worries or concerns.
  - ▶ Developed and published bespoke Reporting Modules as part of our new online training program.
  - ▶ Provided template complaint handling procedures as part of our National Safeguarding Guidance.
- ▶ Quality-assured our Member Y Safeguarding Procedures to ensure they maintain child and young person focus.
  - ▶ Analysed our national safeguarding data to identify case trends and themes to further enhance our preventative practice.
  - ▶ Developed child and young people-friendly resources for safeguarding investigations.
  - ▶ Taught children and young people how to make complaints using our Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program.

### Our priorities for 2022:

1. **Review the learnings from the ACF Review process on how we can enhance our complaints and concerns processes further.**
2. **Remain a full participating institution in the National Redress Scheme.**
3. **Develop and Implement National Safeguarding Investigations Guidance document.**

*'If you report to an adult- when you tell them, they'll be proud of you'*

Amelia, 9 years old - the Y's Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Program

# Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep Children and Young People safe through ongoing education and training

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 7

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Developed and published our first ever National Safeguarding Online Training specific to our work in Early Years, Out of School Hours Care, Sport and Recreation and Youth Empowerment.
- ▶ Piloted our Safe Behaviours Training to our Canberra Region Member Y.
- ▶ Co-designed and published our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Program for our people with the support of the eSafety Commissioner.
- ▶ Delivered Trainers for Trainers training to our Safeguarding Leads.
- ▶ Continued to provide bespoke Safeguarding Training to our Boards and Executive Teams.
- ▶ Implemented the first ever national safeguarding Community of Impacts for our Early Years, Out of School Hours Care, Sport and Recreation and Youth sectors to share best practice, promote reflective practice and learn from each other.
- ▶ Republished our training model and plan in our National Safeguarding Guidance.
- ▶ Reviewed our education and training methodology in our National Safeguarding Guidance.
- ▶ Delivered Trainers for Trainers to our Member Y Safeguarding Leads.
- ▶ Embedded the voices of children in our National Safeguarding Online Training
- ▶ Provided Covid-Safe training to our Y People.
- ▶ Published child and young person friendly Covid-19 resources around our Centres.

### Our priorities for 2022:

1. **Upskill our Y People further by providing training on our National Critical Incident Policy including how to make a notifiable report to Y Australia for safeguarding incidents.**
2. **Delivering our Safe Behaviours training to all Y People who work directly with children and young people.**
3. **Designing a suite of training modules that empower our Y People to safeguard children and young people from diverse backgrounds.**

*The Feel Safe Be Safe training was really engaging so it went really quickly. Definitely one of the better training modules I have done!*

New Employee Y Victoria - Feel Safe Be Safe Training

# Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for Children and Young People to be harmed

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 8

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Undertook risk assessments of our physical and online sites where children and young people engage and interact.
  - ▶ Created Virtual Y with the support of the Victorian Government to support young people to remain connected and active during Covid-19 lockdowns.
  - ▶ Ensured our IT security settings were fit for practice in our Member Ys.
  - ▶ Co-designed and launched our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Program to empower children, young people and adults to tell someone if they are worried about safeguarding concerns online through funding from the eSafety Commissioner.
  - ▶ Updated our eSafety Commitment to strengthen our approach of keeping children and young people safe online.
  - ▶ Supported Member Ys who transitioned their programs and services to online or virtual platforms during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- ▶ Continued to ensure that our physical environments comply with workplace health and safety regulations, industry regulations and safeguarding requirements (such as regular checking of change rooms and dedicated safe spaces for children and young people).
  - ▶ Engaged with young people to create a safe National Office that embodies our belief in the power of inspired young people.
  - ▶ Continued engaging with young people through our WhyNot Platform to amplify the voices of young people and hear the issues they are facing.
  - ▶ Published national risk assessment templates to support our Member Ys with their safeguarding risk assessments.

### Our priorities for 2022:

- 1. Roll out our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Training to all our Y People to ensure they are equipped with the skills to keep children and young people safe online.**
- 2. Empower children and young people to undertake our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Training to help them stay safe online.**
- 3. Empower families and communities to undertake our Stay Safe Online, Tell Someone Training to help them stay safe online.**

# Implementation of the national child safe principles are regularly reviewed and improved

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 9

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Reviewed our progress against our Safeguarding Strategy.
- ▶ Undertook a full review of our safeguarding resources and templates.
- ▶ Supported our Member Ys to use the learning from safeguarding cases to inform the development of their Safeguarding Action Plans.
- ▶ Published our new Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards to ensure best practice safeguarding considerations were accounted for.
- ▶ Continued to partner with the ACF to review our Member Ys to ensure they are compliant with our Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards.
- ▶ Engaged the ACF to provide us continual review of our Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards and support Y Safeguarding to ensure we are at the forefront of safeguarding practice.
- ▶ Reviewed our national safeguarding case data to identify analyse trends to further inform our safeguarding work.
- ▶ Listened to the voices of children and young people across our Member Ys to enhance our practice across our services.
- ▶ Developed feedback mechanisms for children, young people, families and communities to ensure we heard from all communities across Australia.

### Our priorities for 2022:

1. **Undertake a systematic review of all safeguarding case data every quarter.**
2. **Develop a thematic report of safeguarding cases and issues at the end of the financial year to inform the development of our preventative work.**
3. **Develop our safeguarding self-assessment framework for our Member Ys.**

# Policies and procedures document how the Y is safe for Children and Young People

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE

# 10

In 2021, we:

- ▶ Published our child and young person-friendly versions of our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy across all our Member Ys.
- ▶ Implemented our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy across our Member Ys.
- ▶ Updated our National Safeguarding Guidance to provide best practice advice on creating and implementing safeguarding policies and procedures that keep children and young people safe.
- ▶ Undertook quality assurance reviews of our Member Ys Safeguarding Procedures.
- ▶ Implemented our National Safe Behaviours across our Member Ys - including child and young person-friendly versions.
- ▶ Reviewed and updated our National Critical Incident Reporting Policy through consultation with our collective Australian Member Ys. The updated Policy defines what a Safeguarding critical incident, how it should be managed and reported to Y Australia; and how it is managed.
- ▶ Reviewed and published related Safeguarding policies and procedures across our Member Ys.
- ▶ Sought feedback from children, young people, families and communities in the review of our Safeguarding and associated policies and procedures.

### Our priorities for 2022:

1. **Scope the requirements for a National eSafety Policy.**
2. **Seek additional feedback on our National Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and the associated child-friendly policies.**
3. **Update our associated safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure we are at the forefront of safeguarding practice.**

*'I really love the new look policy- it is making having conversations with staff so much easier. The language is clearer, the presentation of the policy using the colourcoding is brilliant, creates a great flow. Educators see a clear link from the policy directly into their service Quality Improvement Plans now, it's kicking goals!'*

Educator, Y Ballarat

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For further information on how the Y is embedding the 10 National Child Safe Principles and recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse recommendations, please contact our Y Safeguarding Charity.

*We believe in the power of  
inspired young people*

**YSafeguarding**  
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