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| Higher Education and Skills Group  **Participation Branch Memo**  **Department of Education and Training** |

***NUMBER:*** *2017 /JANUARY /23*

**TO:**

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| Learn Local organisations  *– ALL* | ACFE Board | ACFE Regional Councils |
| Adult Education Institutions | Learn Local Stakeholders | Participation Branch Staff |

**FROM:** Verna Kearney, Acting Director - Participation Branch

**DATE:** 23/ 01 / 2017

**SUBJECT:** Child Safe Standards for VET and Higher Education providers

**ACTIONS / CRITICAL DATES:**

* Victoria’s child safe standards came into effect post-school education and training providers on 1 January 2017. These providers are required to work towards compliance with the seven Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) child safe standards from that date.
* All Learn Local organisations should visit the links below for further information.

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**Background**

Victoria’s child safe standards came into effect for post-school education and training providers on 1 January 2017. This includes TAFE, Higher Education and community organisations. Providers are required to work towards compliance with the seven Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) child safe standards from that date.

This follows the standards being applied to Non-School Senior Secondary Providers as of 1 January 2016. http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/training/providers/learnlocal/memo/2016/20160913.docx

The standards respond to the findings of the *Betrayal of Trust* report into the handling of child abuse by religious and under non-government organisations.

VRQA child safe webpage**:** [**http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/default.html**](http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/default.html)

**Child Safe Standards**

In complying with the child safe standards, an entity to which the standards apply must include the following principles as part of each standard:

* promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
* promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
* promoting the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an entity to which the standards apply must have:

* Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
* Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
* Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
* Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
* Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
* Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
* Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

**Further Information**

For further information on the principles and standards see the Commission for Children and Young People at: http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/index.htm

If providers require any further resources, they can be found at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/vetguidance.aspx

Additional resources can also be found on the VRQA website: <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/default.html>