



# THIRD ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

NOVEMBER 2020

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





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# Executive Summary

The Salvation Army (TSA) Australia is actively committed to ensuring children and young people are safe across all its activities and programs. The recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (the Royal Commission) were accepted by TSA in 2017 and since this time, consistent work has been undertaken to implement the recommendations. In 2018 the two former territories of The Salvation Army were merged to form one national territory and a project was initiated to develop a national child safe framework. The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (the National Principles) were adopted by TSA in 2019. TSA incorporated the National Principles and the Royal Commission recommendations into both its Policy and Framework for the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People (the Framework).

TSA leadership and personnel commit to the principles that all children have a right to feel and be safe, have a voice and have the right to be heard on issues affecting them. These principles are at the centre of TSA's Framework for the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People.

Over the past 12 months, TSA has continued to focus on strengthening its system for protecting children and young people and improving the processes that support its safeguarding practice. During 2020, TSA has implemented substantial initiatives to improve child safety including:

- Recruitment and screening processes
- Child safe training
- Opportunities for child and youth participation
- Incident, feedback and complaints management system
- Enhanced activity risk assessment
- Review of risks to children and young people
- Development and review of policies and procedures that support child safety

The Professional Standards Committee of the Board continues to ensure the National Principles are fully implemented and that child safety risk is managed.

## SECTION 1:

### THE SALVATION ARMY AUSTRALIA

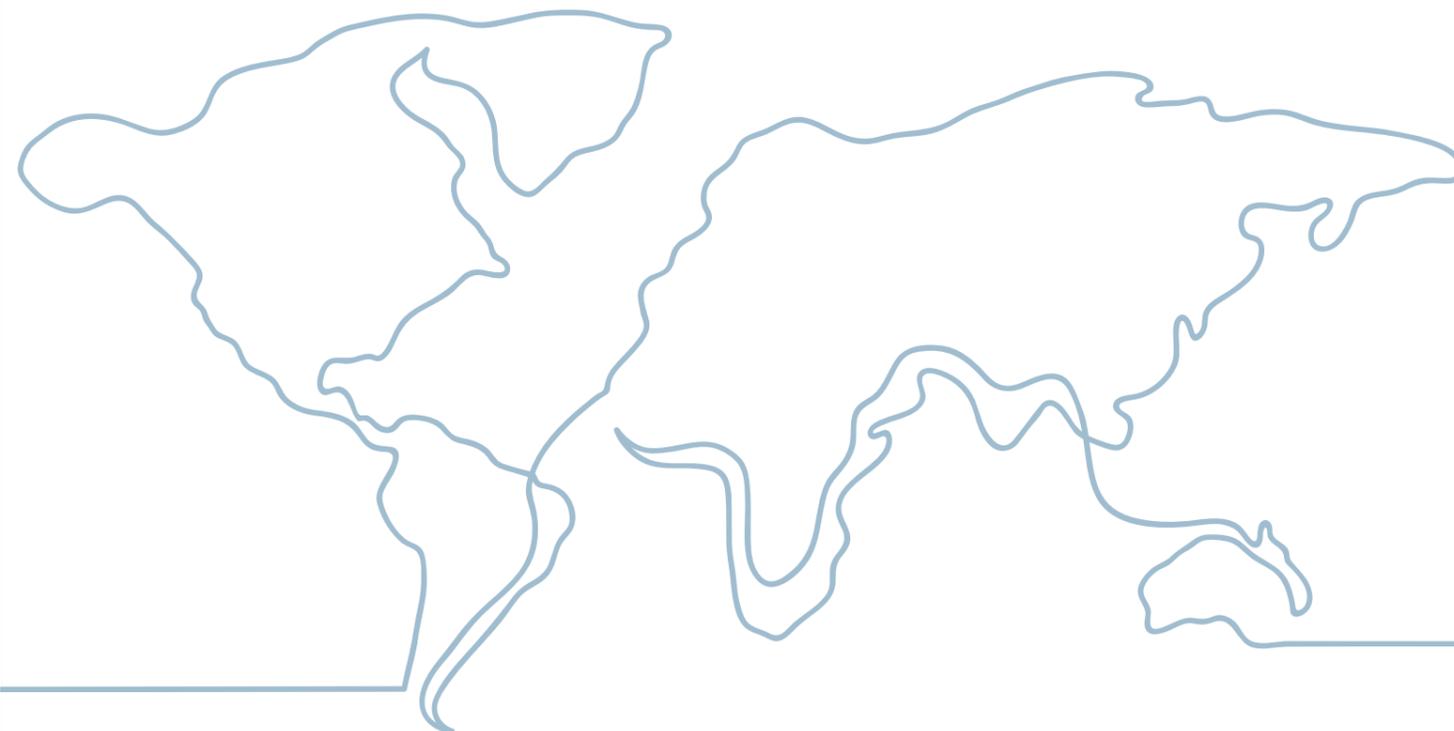
TSA is an international evangelical Christian movement operating as both a religious and a charitable organisation. It commenced in London in the 1860s and its International Headquarters (IHQ) is in London. IHQ is responsible for the overarching strategic direction that governs all Salvation Army territories internationally.

In 2017, IHQ updated its Child Protection Policy Framework to guide consistent global safeguarding practice and to establish measures of accountability. This update ensures TSA, as an international movement, works to the same standards in protecting children.

TSA has operated in Australia since 1880 and has a significant history of working with

and advocating for the rights and needs of vulnerable people in the community. TSA is committed to the promotion of social justice and the protection of the rights of disadvantaged and vulnerable people, including children and youth at risk. This is consistent with its values of integrity, compassion, respect, diversity and collaboration. Today, TSA is one of the largest national providers of welfare and social support services in Australia. It provides over 1,000 social programs and activities through a network of churches, social support services and community centres across the country.

On 1 December 2018, TSA became a single, unified movement in Australia. Its overriding objective to align and unite its vision and voice to create greater impact, increased innovation, stronger partnerships and better stewardship for the communities it serves.



## TSA Governance Structure

The Australia Territory of TSA is legally constituted through eight Property Trust Acts representing each state and territory that it operates in nationally.

TSA's Governance Board is committed to a high standard of governance that provides assurance to all TSA members and the community that it can achieve its objectives and deliver its mission (Governance Policy).

The Board, which is chaired by the Territorial Commander, is accountable for its responsibilities to the General, who is the international leader of TSA.

The following five committees support the Board in its role:

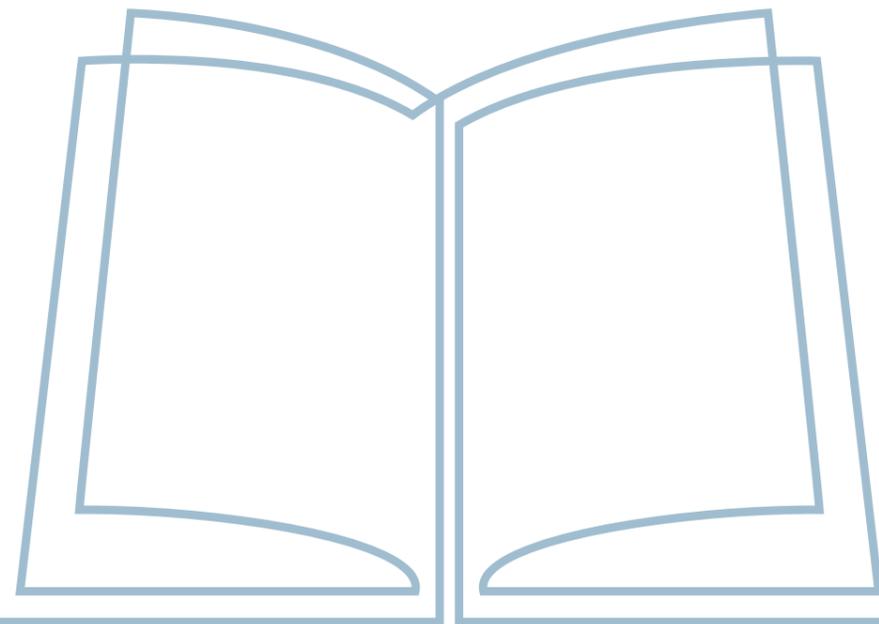
- Audit and Risk
- Quality and Safety
- Professional Standards
- Nominations
- Pastoral Committee

## The Salvation Army – Child Safety and Safeguarding

TSA's Framework embeds the National Principles and Royal Commission recommendations across TSA. The approach to implementation of the Framework includes three work streams.

These include:

- 1** **Work stream 1:** Frontline child safety practice development
- 2** **Work stream 2:** Policy, procedures, processes and systems
- 3** **Work stream 3:** Governance and leadership



### **1** WORK STREAM 1: Frontline child safety practice developments

The Safeguarding Consultants, located in TSA state and territory frontline operational teams, are highly specialised child safe practitioners. They actively support personnel to embed nationally consistent child safe policy and procedures in their day-to-day operations. Safeguarding Consultants have a central role in building the capacity of frontline staff to deliver child focused services, manage harm and risk of harm to children and young people and create environments that foster inclusion and wellbeing. They do this through the provision of training, advice and support and, the provision of tools, knowledge and resources that enhance safe service delivery.

### **2** WORK STREAM 2: Safeguards built into policies, procedures, processes, systems and training

The Safeguarding Policy and Practice team comprises a group of specialists who work to develop and strengthen policies, procedures, resources and training that support and enhance the safeguarding practice of frontline personnel. This team works in partnership with other departments such as Human Resources, Property, Mission Support and Social Mission to embed safeguards in all aspects of the movement's work and to align with its mission and values. The Safeguarding Policy and Practice team monitors and evaluates the development of child safe practices at TSA. They identify areas for

improvement and draw upon current research and best-practice models to enhance TSA child safe tools, measures and practice.

### **3** WORK STREAM 3: Governance and Leadership

TSA's governance ensures and promotes leadership accountability for child safety across all levels of the movement. While subject matter expertise is provided by specialist Safeguarding Staff, all TSA personnel, in all departments and across all mission expressions are responsible for child safety and wellbeing. TSA leaders implement the processes and reforms developed by the Safeguarding Policy and Practice Team and input into the development and further enhancement of policies, processes and tools that support safety and wellbeing. Regular reports on progress are provided to the Professional Standards Committee of the Board who maintain oversight of TSAs implementation of the Framework.

## SECTION 2:

### THE SALVATION ARMY'S CHILD SAFE PROGRESS REPORT

TSA has adopted the National Principles, which were endorsed by members of the Council of Australian Governments, the prime minister, state premiers and territory chief ministers, in February 2019. These National Principles give effect to recommendations of the Royal Commission relating to the child safe standards.

TSA has also adopted the recommendations of the Royal Commission to religious institutions (*Report Volume 16*). The National Principles and actions related to recommendations to religious institutions are embedded in TSA's Framework.

TSA actively engages with partner agencies and government bodies to ensure our policy, practice and processes are consistent with industry and sector standards and operate within the intent of the state and territory oversight bodies. TSA is an active member of the National Council of Churches in Australia and collaborates with other member churches to strengthen child safe maturity across the sector. We are partnering with industry leaders such as the Australian Childhood Foundation and the Australian Catholic University to ensure our frameworks are evidence-based and that we have robust evidence of children and young people's engagement and experience across TSA. We actively engage with government bodies in their oversight of reportable conduct and working with children check schemes.

This year, the National Office for Child Safety has requested that TSA report against several measures including:

**Measure 1.1: Implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations/Child Safe Standards (or jurisdictional equivalent) (Volumes 6,7, Recommendations 6.4 - 6.6, 7.8)**

**Measure 1.2: Improvements to institutional responding and report (volume 7, Recommendations 7.7 and 7.8)**

**Measure 1.3: Improvements to record-keeping and information sharing (volume 8, Recommendations 8.1 and 8.4)**

TSA's response to the above measures is documented against the National Principles that form the basis of our Framework. We have titled our response Theme 1: Making The Salvation Army Child Safe. This section also includes progress made with the recommendations outlined in *Volume 16* of the Royal Commission recommendations.

The National Office for Child Safety has also requested an update in relation to Measure 2.1: Children's Voices. A response to this measure is included under Theme 1 of this paper, National Principle 2: Children and young people are informed about their rights and participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 1:

### CHILD AND YOUTH SAFETY AND WELLBEING IS EMBEDDED IN TSA LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

TSA is committed to child safety and has zero tolerance for child abuse. This commitment is published on TSA's website alongside TSA's Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy, the Code of Conduct and, complaint mechanisms. Throughout 2020, a range of resources have been added to TSA's website to provide practical guidance for children and youth, their families and the community.

The Territorial Leaders, Commissioners Janine and Robert Donaldson, continue to commit to child safety and safe inclusive environments.



**Children have an important role within The Salvation Army, and it is of the highest priority that we provide a place where they can be safe, feel safe and be respected and valued.**

*Territorial Leaders  
Janine and Robert Donaldson,  
2020*



The Professional Standards Committee of the Board monitors, evaluates and governs the development of TSA's child safe culture. The Quality and Safety Committee of the Board monitors incidents and complaints related to children and young people and has 'safety' as a key domain in TSA's quality framework.

The Executive Mission Council monitors and evaluates TSA's performance through regular reports relating to child safe risk management, child safe compliance, child safe culture development and incidents and complaints.

#### TSA Code of Conduct

Consistent with *Recommendation 7.8* and *National Principle 1*, child safety is embedded in TSA's Code of Conduct Policy (Code of Conduct) and Code of Conduct Standards (Standards). The Code of Conduct clearly articulates that TSA is a child safe organisation and embeds TSA's commitment to providing an environment that:

- Is safe and inclusive for children, where they feel respected, safe, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential
- Embraces the strengths and individual characteristics of children, regardless of their abilities, sex and sexual identity, gender and gender identity or social economic or cultural background
- A zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse and harm

The Standards define expected behaviours, as well as standards and responsibilities of personal conduct in all areas of work. This includes expectations relating to working with children and young people. For example, the Standards address behaviours relating to:

- Mandatory background checks for personnel in direct contact with children and/or young people
- Recognition of the power imbalance between personnel and children and young people
- Reporting obligations, including the mandatory requirement for personnel to report immediately any concerns or incidents of child abuse or harm, and the need to act to ensure any risk is removed/reduced
- Physical contact and one-on-one interactions with children and young people
- Children's program and activity guidelines for overnight stays, camps and sleeping arrangements
- Transporting children
- Communication with children, including electronic communications

#### The Salvation Army's Risk Management Framework

TSA is committed to preventing, identifying and mitigating risk to children and young

people. TSA's Risk Management Framework identifies risks and controls across four dimensions: vulnerability risk, situational risk, propensity risk and institutional risk.

During 2020, the following risk controls were reviewed and strengthened including:

- Recruitment processes: Screening processes to ensure TSA recruits individuals who are appropriate to work with children
- Onboarding and induction processes: Mandatory and specialist training for personnel to ensure TSA personnel can recognise child abuse, document concerns and report to appropriate authorities and TSA management
- The participation of children and young people in program development
- Standardised processes for managing allegations of harm to children
- Management processes for people with concerning behaviours, allegations and/or convictions
- Enhanced activity risk assessment processes
- Standardised risk controls for common program and activity processes: for example, transporting children
- Incident and Complaints management process: The end-to-end incident and complaints process was reviewed including the management of incidents

and complaints, documenting and recording incidents and complaints, notification and escalation processes, reporting processes and analysis of trends and root causes. A system has been implemented to manage these processes, which enables TSA to identify risks to children and strengthen risk controls at a local and systemic level.

### Record keeping and sharing information

TSA has reviewed its recordkeeping and information sharing processes, consistent with *Royal Commission report Volume 8, recommendations 8.1 and 8.4*.

TSA recognises the critical importance of ensuring appropriate record-keeping processes to allow for delayed disclosure of abuse by survivors. TSA takes into account the limitation periods for civil actions for child sexual abuse and as a movement that engages in child-related work, TSA retains records relating to child abuse and misconduct that has occurred or is alleged to have occurred. These records are retained in the individual's personnel file and are also centralised with restricted access by Safeguarding Consultants. TSA is working on its record retention schedules which will include requirements to retain any records that could be linked to child abuse and misconduct for a minimum period of 45 years.

TSA continues to enhance processes that support full and accurate records relevant to child safety and wellbeing. TSA views effective record-management processes

as an integral part of its leadership and governance commitments and as being essential to the best interests of children and survivors of abuse.

During 2020, TSA reviewed its incident and complaints management policies, procedures and systems and designed a new system for recording and managing incidents and complaints. This new system includes categorisation, classification, recording, notification and escalation processes. Training was implemented to ensure personnel understand their obligations within the new system.

TSA Safeguarding Consultants investigate all reported incidents of child abuse and breaches of the Code of Conduct relating to children, including grooming or concerning behaviour. Investigations and risk assessments are recorded in an indexed and secure system with restricted access to the Safeguarding Team.

Information relating to alleged offenders is shared with regulatory authorities.

TSA approved and published its Knowledge, Information and Data Management Policy, which underpins an overarching and all-encompassing approach to its management, retention and protection of information and records.

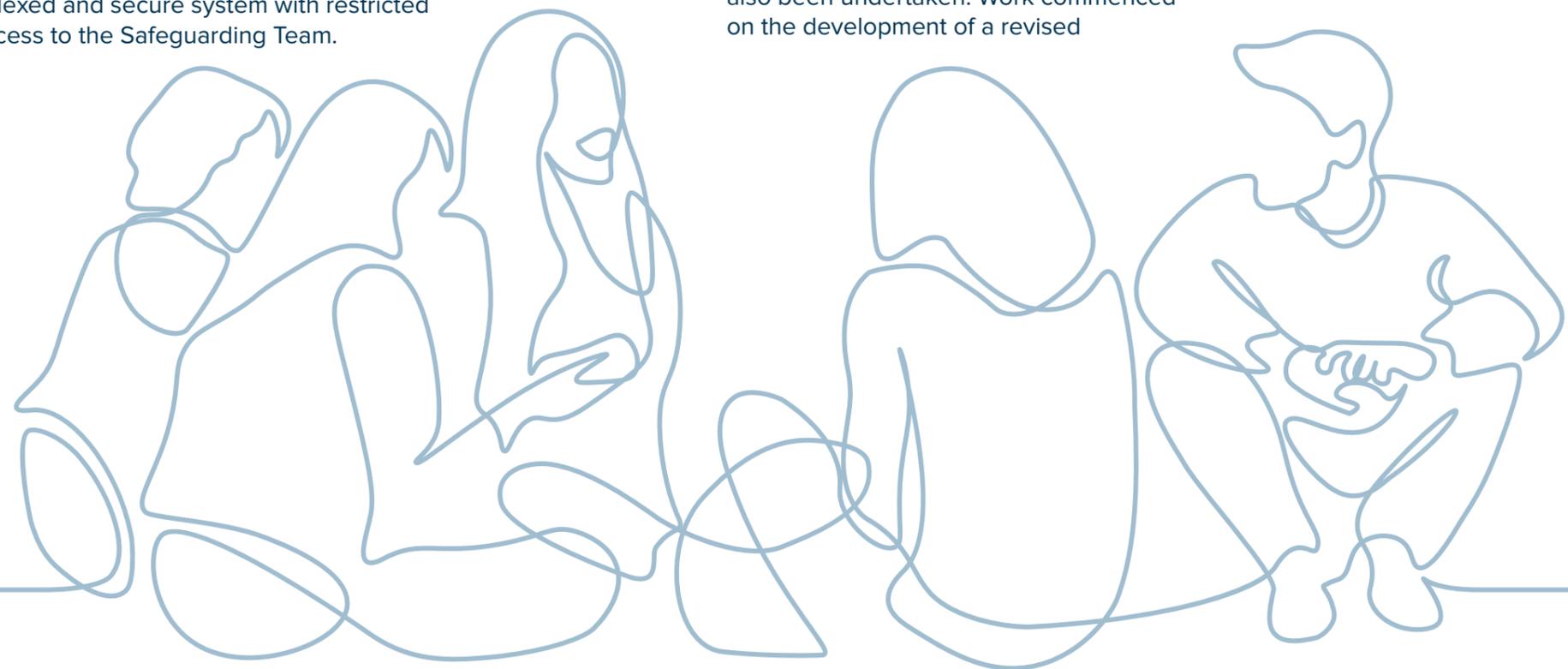
An enterprise project was initiated to review archived records, and redesign processes for storing records across TSA. This includes the development of an enterprise system for storing and retrieving all archived records including those relating to children.

A review of information-sharing practices was undertaken, including information sharing relating to children. A review of the Privacy and Service Delivery policies has also been undertaken. Work commenced on the development of a revised

Information Sharing Guide, which will be published in 2021.

#### Goals 2021

- 1 Feedback from children, families and community is used to strengthen and enhance the Code of Conduct and Code of Conduct Standards
- 2 Review and strengthen procedures relating to document storage and retention including classification of information and processes relevant to historical records and archiving
- 3 Publish revised Information Sharing Guide



## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 2:

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE INFORMED ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS, PARTICIPATE IN DECISIONS AFFECTING THEM AND ARE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

Consistent with *Report Volume 6, Recommendations 6.5 and 6.6*, TSA continues to review and strengthen the way children participate in decisions that affect them.



**When supporting young people, we begin with the lived experience of young people. This means we need to know what it is like to be a teenager today, and to understand their day-to-day lives. To do this we must learn to hear what it is they have to share.**

*The Leaders Lounge Practice Resource: How Do We Listen to Lived Experience of Young People? The National Youth & Young Adults Team, 2020.*



#### Children are informed

In 2020, TSA continued to engage in activities that reinforce and facilitate the inclusion of children and young people's voices in service delivery and design. TSA has two teams dedicated to the engagement of children and young people in its mission. The National Childrens Team and the Youth and Young Adult Team have representatives located in each state and territory as well as specialist staff. The teams support frontline personnel to deliver quality programs that meet the needs of children and youth from TSA faith communities.

TSA has included the voice of children in safeguarding development work, program planning, implementation and improvement. In December 2019, TSA held a development day for senior leaders that highlighted the importance of child safe environments, including the importance of participation and inclusion for children and young people. As part of this event, young people from TSA shared with senior leaders their experience of safety and inclusion and children's views were shared through words and pictures created by children at TSA events.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many youth events moved online. Young people have been and continue to be actively engaged in developing the content, structure and focus of online programs. They have been actively involved in developing the focus and context of Carnival Online and have participated in

online surveys, focus groups, program evaluations and interviews as part of TSA's EQUIP online camp. Information gathered during EQUIP will be used to inform program development moving forward.

TSA remains committed to making its complaints processes accessible to children and young people. Child-friendly complaints posters are available for display in worship centres and services and a simple English version of TSA's child safe commitment and Code of Conduct is included in documents such as the parent/carers camp booklet. Welcome booklets have been introduced in social mission youth services and provide information service delivery, young people's rights and responsibilities and how to make a complaint and provide feedback. These processes are also discussed with young people at intake. Posters are displayed that detail children's rights, including inclusion and participation, and complaints and feedback processes.

#### Children feel connected and supported

Work associated with TSA's Listening Project, conducted by the Youth and Young Adults team in 2019 has continued in 2020. The "lived experience" survey, conducted as part of this project, sought information about young people's experience of events at TSA. Information gathered confirmed that relationships are important to young people and a key factor that drives youth attendance at TSA. Overwhelmingly, the

representative response from young people is: I come to events to see my friends and connect with God.

Peer relationships and belonging are crucial to the development of wellbeing and the cornerstone of children and youth activities in TSA faith communities. In 2019, to understand what was working well in these programs, the Youth and Young Adults team interviewed young people from across Australia. Information gathered during interviews has informed TSA's understanding of youth engagement and the four factors critical to positive program outcomes: wellbeing (TSA invests in young people's lives), fun (young people were able to engage positively with friends), family (young people had a sense of belonging) and faith (young people found a sense of purpose, hope and connection to God).

The importance of positive peer relationships is a key driver for the Youth and Young Adults and Children's teams and is an ongoing topic of reflection in TSA communities of practice including the TSA's Leaders Lounge and the Australian Children's Leadership Network. Relationships (including peer relationships) is one of the domains identified in TSA's Youth Model of Care and a key focus of case workers when working with young people in TSA Youth Services.

## Children have the knowledge and skills to help keep them safe

In October 2020, TSA expanded the resources on its public facing safeguarding page to include safety resources for children and families such as links to Kids Helpline, eHeadspace and the eSafety Commissioner.

The Safeguarding Toolkit contains resources that support front line staff to communicate with children about their safety including, child friendly complaints posters, child rights poster and R U OK? cards.

In 2021, TSA will implement the NSW Office of the Children's Guardians SAFE Series Protective behaviours workshops nationally.

## TSA personnel can identify harm and report

During 2020, TSA extended its mandatory Safeguarding Principles training and released the Safeguarding@TSA module. This module provides information about how to recognise and respond to allegations of child abuse and includes specific information about how to respond to children and young people when they raise concerns of harm.

In July 2020, TSA published its Lived Experience Participation Policy. This policy outlines TSA's commitment to a rights-based participative approach and focuses on the movement's commitment to

equipping and encouraging participation of all clients, participants and beneficiaries inclusive of children and young people.

A new Youth Services Model of Care has been developed and outlines requirements for safety across the dimensions of physical, emotional, environmental, cultural, spiritual, religious and system domains. The model is based on the principles of participatory practice and the provision of meaningful youth engagement including contribution to service delivery and design. In 2021, TSA will continue establishing these groups nationally.

In TSA youth services, continuous improvement registers are monitored by service managers to ensure all feedback from young people is documented and responded to appropriately. TSA actively seeks feedback by conducting exit interviews with young people to provide the opportunity for feedback and service improvement. Work has commenced on TSA's Participation Framework and Standards which will be finalised in 2021. As noted above, work on the Listening Project has continued and children's and youth leaders continue to provide opportunities for

children and youth to actively participate and raise concerns.

TSA has partnered with the Australian Catholic University to undertake a survey of children and young people's experience of safety at TSA. In October 2020, the Australian Catholic University facilitated a focus group with youth from TSA worship communities so that it could start the process of developing the children's surveys.

### Goals 2021

- 1 Ideas generated by young people during the EQUIP Camp and the "Lived Experience" survey are used to shape youth programs and engagement
- 2 In partnership with the Australian Catholic University, TSA will conduct a national survey of children and young people's experience of safety at TSA
- 3 TSA to implement the NSW Children's Guardian SAFE Series protective behaviours workshops and tools



### NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 3:

#### **FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES ARE INFORMED AND INVOLVED IN PROMOTING CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING**

TSA has focused on making its safeguarding policies and frameworks accessible to families and the broader community. TSA has made a concerted effort to deepen its conversation with children, families and young people about the decisions that affect them. In 2020, TSA launched its Lived Experience Policy, which outlines TSA's commitment to engaging with all beneficiaries including children and young people and the networks that support their care.

TSA continues to publish information about its child safe approach on its public-facing website. TSA's Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and Framework as well as TSA's Commitment Statement, Code of Conduct Policy and Standards, Incident Management Policy and Feedback and Complaints Policy are available to families and the general public. These documents are also available as summary documents and with simple English versions where appropriate. Posters and material outlining TSA's child safe approach have been developed and are available for display and distribution at all service sites.

In October 2020, TSA commenced a 12-month review of its Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and

Framework. To coincide with this review, TSA is inviting community and family members to provide feedback via a link on its public facing website. The request for feedback will also be advertised on TSA Facebook sites for children and young people.

Parents of children accessing programs and activities are provided with information regarding the specific operations and management of their program. This includes parents being provided with information on TSA's child safe approach including expected behaviours and reporting requirements.

#### Goals 2021

- 1 Families and community resources will be made accessible in a variety of languages and formats
- 2 TSA will continue to promote opportunities for family and community members to engage in the review and development of policy, procedures and programs

### NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 4:

#### **EQUITY IS UPHELD, AND DIVERSE NEEDS RESPECTED IN POLICY AND PRACTICE**

#### **Personnel understand children and young people's diverse circumstances and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable**

In September 2020, TSA published its national Diversity and Inclusion Policy, outlining TSA's commitment to maintaining worship, service and work environments that are fair, safe and inclusive. This policy sits alongside the Lived Experience Policy, which takes a rights-based approach to participation and values the experience of all clients, participants and beneficiaries of TSA services.

Safeguarding@TSA training released in August 2020 highlights the increased vulnerability of children and young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, children with lived experience of disability, LGBTIQ children and young people from diverse family and cultural backgrounds.

Diversity and Inclusion has been a focal point of the National Children's Team during 2020, with the team facilitating webinars for ministry leaders, staff and volunteers including webinars for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Days and an All Abilities Webinar.

Journey to Independence (TSA's Youth Services Model of Care Framework), developed in August 2020, reinforces TSA's rights-based approach to equity and inclusion. This framework highlights the increased vulnerabilities that young people from diverse backgrounds can experience including marginalisation, stigma and discrimination. The framework recognises the importance of intersectionality and applies this construct to inform a culturally responsive and inclusive approach.

TSA has a Diversity and Inclusion team, which exists to enable inclusive culture and practice across TSA. This team provides resources and coaching to TSA personnel, which is supported by an internal toolkit. These resources will be expanded to include tools that support inclusive practice with children and young people.

There are several Salvation Army corps (churches) that include individuals from specific cultural groups. These corps are often staffed by corps officers and volunteers from the same cultural background. To support the safeguarding development of staff and volunteers within these corps, TSA has added language subtitles to its Safeguarding@TSA training.



### **Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand**

In 2020, TSA developed and released its Feedback and Complaints policy, which outlines how complaints are made and managed. In line with its Feedback and Complaints policy, TSA has produced child-friendly complaints posters and a simple english version complaints document. These resources are available on TSA's public facing website and available for display at all TSA sites. TSA has commenced translating these resources into other languages for both display and inclusion in its online resources.

TSA is in the process of developing a national practice guide for the management of children and vulnerable adults complaints. This activity is being undertaken with inputs from TSA's Diversity and Inclusion Team and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministries. In line with TSA's Lived Experience Framework, TSA will be seeking advice from key stakeholder groups including children and young people with diverse cultures, abilities and gender identities about how to ensure this guide supportssupports their access to complaints processes.

### **National Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)**

TSA remains committed to the development of inclusive practice environments and activities that meet the needs of all our children and young people. Projects that inform activity development such as the Listening Project undertaken by the Youth and Young Adults team, have sought views from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth, youth from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ youth and youth with lived experience of disability.

The Salvation Army is developing its National Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP will be published in December and outlines TSA's commitment to and continued actions in relation to reconciliation. The RAP provides guidance for TSA personnel in developing and supporting culturally safe environments, including ways of engaging and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To support the implementation of the RAP, TSA personnel were invited to participate in a series of yarning circles in July and August 2020. These circles provided personnel with an opportunity to explore their own understanding of reconciliation and how they could contribute to the reconciliation journey.

Journey to Independence (TSA's Youth Services Model of Care Framework) draws upon the Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework and acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collectivist constructions of self, embedded within kinship, country and community. It also adopts the eight good practice principles for inclusive services developed by the Centre for Multicultural Youth. Particular attention is paid in the framework to the needs of LGBTIQ children and young people and the support of those young people who are transitioning.

TSA has developed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workplace Competency Framework to support the development of culturally safe and inclusive practices across the movement.

#### **Goals 2021**

**1** TSA to establish reference groups that include children and young people from culturally diverse background including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ and children and young people of all abilities

**2** TSA to continue to enhance pathways so that children and young people's advice and feedback can shape programs and service delivery

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 5:

### PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE SUITABLE AND SUPPORTED TO REFLECT CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING VALUES IN PRACTICE

#### Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and pre-employment screening

TSA implemented a new Human Resource Management System (Workday) in 2019. Functionality of Workday was enhanced in 2020 to include recruitment processes, referee checks, and pre-employment screening processes.

TSA Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy requires all personnel who work with children and young people to have working with children checks or equivalent background checks. TSA operates nationally and is required to meet integrity check requirements across all state and territories. Inconsistency in regulatory requirements has resulted in TSA having to operate under multiple compliance frameworks. During 2020, TSA established an Integrity Checking Unit and has established a single framework for the management of integrity check compliance across Australia. This framework has involved TSA reviewing all its position descriptions with a view to reflect responsibilities relating to the prevention

of child safety risks and integrity check requirements.

Worker roles and check requirements are centralised in Workday, integrity checks are processed by a centralised team and renewal notifications automated through the Workday system.

Processes are in place to ensure that officers from international and interstate locations are compliant with integrity check requirements when they change jurisdiction.

TSA is tightening its approach to contingent workforce management and new contingent workforce processes will require all workers supplied by labour hire agencies to be reference checked and have evidence of criminal history checks and working with children checks. Ongoing contractors will be required to complete mandatory safeguarding training in line with TSA's induction requirements.

Safeguarding requirements have been built into the recruitment process and embedded in forms and templates from advertising through to interview and selection. These requirements have also been embedded in officer recruitment processes. Psychological assessment is included as a preadmission requirement for officer cadets to ascertain their suitability to work with children.

#### Induction, Supervision and People Management

TSA's Mandatory Code of Conduct Training

and Safeguarding Principles Training were implemented during 2019. The Code of Conduct training includes TSA's expected behaviours when working with children and young people. The Safeguarding Principles Training includes awareness on recognising abuse, responding to concerns of abuse, recording and reporting abuse. During 2020, a third mandatory induction module was developed and implemented – Safeguarding@TSA. This module covers the responsibility of TSA personnel to report abuse, record abuse and comply with TSA's incident management system. Personnel are required to complete all modules during induction and at regular intervals thereafter.

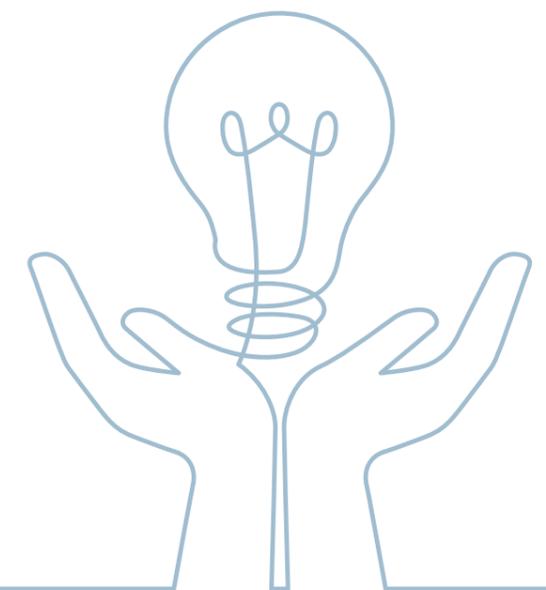
TSA has strengthened its accountability framework to include a performance quadrant on safety and wellbeing for children and the Executive Mission Council has set safeguarding performance targets for leaders. Officers of TSA participate in performance appraisal processes called Ministry and Development Planning where their expectations and goals, including child safe requirements are agreed upon. During 2020 both Line Manager Position Descriptions and Briefs of Appointment (role descriptions for officers) have been reviewed to include child safe responsibilities.

During 2020, TSA reviewed its policy and guidelines for Professional Pastoral Supervision. The revised guidelines include a panel of supervisors, including both internal and external supervisors to ensure there is a degree of independence

from where the officer works. This will be implemented in 2021 for all officers and those serving under officer conditions.

#### Goals 2021

- 1 Review child safety and wellbeing statements and questions in recruitment processes to strengthen behavioural-based screening processes
- 2 Development of a specific e-Learning module for record-keeping in relation to incidents and complaints
- 3 Expansion of the child and youth safety and wellbeing performance metrics for senior leaders to cascade throughout their teams
- 4 Review recruitment processes, including training and support resources for line managers



## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 6:

### PROCESSES TO RESPOND TO COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS ARE CHILD AND YOUTH FOCUSED

#### The Centre for Restoration

TSA's Centre for Restoration (CfR) exists to support people who wish to bring a grievance for abuse suffered.

CfR provides support for any person who has been the victim of abuse while in TSA care. When responding to complaints or allegations, CfR is guided by the principles that all persons are entitled to:

- be treated with dignity and respect
- privacy and confidentiality
- due process and efficiency
- prompt and timely service

At the heart of the approach is the principle that each individual is always the main concern of CfR. In its engagement with survivors of abuse, TSA believes that the principles of restorative justice are critically important. TSA engages with survivors in a restorative justice process to help them obtain the outcomes that are the most meaningful for them.

#### Complaints and Incident Management

Consistent with *Recommendation 7 and National Principle 6*, TSA has developed

a process to respond to complaints of harm to children. In 2020, TSA focused on consolidating multiple complaint and incident management systems into a single system covering all service types. This system provides TSA with the capacity to systematically track complaint and incident data and manage, analyse and respond to incident patterns and causation. Individuals making complaints are subject to protected disclosure arrangements as outlined in TSA's Whistleblower Protection Policy.

The Incident Management Policy and Procedure outlines the responsibilities for all personnel who receive complaints or allegations of child abuse including: the responsibility to report in a timely manner and to report as required to authorities. Implementation of Incident Management Training commenced in August 2020 and continues to build personnel knowledge of reporting and recording obligations. These obligations are also reinforced in the Code of Conduct and Safeguarding@TSA training, which form part of TSA mandatory induction processes.

In October 2020 TSA launched its new Person of Interest Policy. TSA is now in the process of finalising its new Management of Safeguarding Concerns procedure, and Management of Person of Interest procedure. These documents outline the role of Safeguarding Consultants in the investigation of harm to children and young people. The procedures outline a clear approach to the management of safeguarding incidents and the

management of risk from known persons of concerns in church based settings. They authorise Safeguarding Consultants to investigate safeguarding incident, assess ongoing risk and develop safeguarding management plans when concerns are present.

#### Processes are known and accessible

TSA is focused on having accessible and known complaints processes that support children and young people to raise their concerns and issues. Currently, the practice of engaging children and young people in complaints processes varies across TSA sites and services. To address this, TSA is undertaking an accessible complaints management project that will map children and young people's knowledge of complaint processes and develop resources and frameworks that increase children and young people's capacity to participate and share their thoughts, feelings and concerns. TSA's approach to child focused complaints processes is

guided by the framework adopted in the NSW Ombudsman and National Office of Child Safety's Complaint Handling Guide, a resource which is currently available in TSA practice toolkits. TSA will publish its own practice guide for accessible and inclusive complaints management in 2021.

#### Goals 2021

- 1 Community friendly complaints resource will be reviewed and updated. These resources will outline TSA complaints process, expected responses and timeframes.
- 2 Incident and complaint data will continue to be analysed and systemic issues identified and addressed in a safeguarding development plan



## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 7:

### TSA PERSONNEL, INCLUDING OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS, ARE EQUIPPED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS TO KEEP CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE THROUGH ONGOING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

A safeguarding development day was hosted for senior leaders in December 2019 and provided information about identifying and managing safeguarding risks. It included presentations from the Australian Childhood Foundation, and Emeritus Professor Stephen Smallbone about building a child safe culture and situational risk. A youth panel shared their views and experiences of safety at TSA and children's voices were represented by words and pictures.

In October 2019, TSA launched its Safeguarding Principles Training, an externally sourced training module from the Australian Childhood Foundation based on the National Principles. This training is mandatory for all TSA officers, employees and child-facing volunteers. Safeguarding@TSA training, an internal training module released in 2020, extends on this training and provides personnel with information on the safeguarding expectations and responsibilities at TSA.

Both the Safeguarding Principles Training and the Safeguarding@TSA training include modules that build capacity to recognise child harm and risk and respond to and report issues of safety. The vicarious impacts for personnel are acknowledged and personnel who respond to and are impacted by child safe issues are encouraged to contact TSA's Employee Assistance Provider and our TSA chaplaincy service for support.

Trauma Informed Care Training and Managing Vicarious Trauma Training are available to TSA staff and supports participants to recognise the signs of trauma and vicarious impacts on self and others.

During 2020, TSA launched safety online training. This included online training sessions provided by the e-Safety Commissioner and podcast run for volunteer leaders.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundational Training and Cultural Inclusion Training is available to all TSA staff.

TSA is currently developing specialist training modules on grooming, child safe leadership, situational safety and activity risk assessment.



### Training for officers

Consistent with *Recommendation 16.43* TSA ensures that candidates for religious ministry (officer cadets) undertake training on child safety related matters. All officers and candidates are required to complete safeguarding induction training modules. In addition, the Safeguarding Policy and Practice Team provide training to second-year cadets. In 2019, this training included an overview of TSA's Child and Youth Safety and Wellbeing Framework, the 10 National Principles, mandatory reporting responsibilities and a staged scenario where participants were required to identify and mitigate situational risks.

### Goals 2021

- 1 Enhance and promote specialist training modules including child safe leadership, grooming, situational safety, risk assessments and online safety
- 2 Change to child safe leadership training will be developed and available.
- 3 Implement cultural capability framework and enhance cultural training to better support culturally safe and responsive practice and environments

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 8:

### PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS PROMOTE SAFETY AND WELLBEING WHILE MINIMISING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE HARMED

TSA's Code of Conduct and Safety and Wellbeing of Children and young people policy and practices commit TSA personnel to respond to child safe risks to children and young people in both physical and online environments. The Safeguarding training as well as the Code of Conduct Training and Volunteer induction processes reinforce knowledge of this requirement among TSA personnel. Safeguarding consultants have supported the roll-out of this training to people who are unable to access it on Australian Childhood Foundation and TSA's online platforms.

During 2020, TSA reviewed and strengthened processes that identify, prevent and respond to risks to children and young people in both the physical and online environments. Activity Risk Assessments and Mission Activity Approval Processes were reviewed and strengthened to identify and mitigate risks across activities and programs within TSA ministry. Step guides and frequently asked questions were developed to support frontline practice and were made available via the Safeguarding toolkit. Safeguarding consultants have continued

to work with frontline staff to develop their understanding of situational risk and mitigation strategies and enhance their child safe knowledge.

In response to COVID-19 restrictions, TSA increased its online service delivery. Considerable attention was focused on mitigating risk in online programs. To address increased risk to children and young people in this environment TSA:

- Reviewed its Digital and Social Media policy and included safeguarding standards for the online environment and an approval process for the use of social media and conferencing platforms
- Hosted online training sessions by the e-Safety Commissioner
- Published tips that support the safe use of online platforms for children's programs in weekly TSA communications

The Safeguarding Policy and Practice team is actively involved in the planning of new buildings and significant property refurbishments to ensure that safeguarding requirements are embedded in the design. Moving forward, TSA will be developing safeguarding standards to be incorporated in the design of all new builds and property refurbishments.

#### Risk management in church-based activities and programs

Activity risk assessments are required for all church functions and activities that engage children and young people.

Historically, TSA has made all such activities subject to formal approval processes, which include the completion of an activity risk assessment. In 2020, TSA reviewed its processes governing church-based children's activities and developed resources to support frontline staff in meeting these requirements. The activity risk assessment process was enhanced to provide added guidance for frontline staff to identify and prevent risks to children and includes components specific to COVID-19 restrictions and online programming.

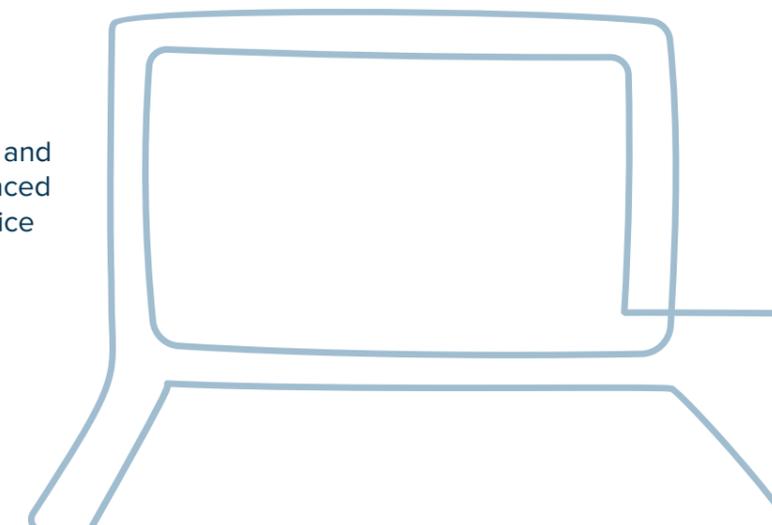
#### Partnership and contract arrangements

TSA engages in partnerships with other churches and funded bodies to meet the needs of children and families in local communities. In 2020, TSA reviewed the documents and Memorandum of Understanding processes to ensure that partner agencies were accountable to meeting legislative requirements and embedding the National Principles in their service delivery.

In addition, TSA has developed requirements for third-party agencies through which we procure contractors and services: including the need for evidenced Working with Children Checks and police checks and participation in mandatory safeguarding induction processes.

#### Goals 2021

- 1 Develop a guide to support the assessment and approval of emerging online platforms
- 2 Develop and implement safeguarding standards that guide the development of environmental modifications for new builds and property renovations
- 3 Finalise and implement the national database for church-based children and youth activities
- 4 Finalise and commence roll out of a national risk-based framework for approving church-based children and youth activities



## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 9:

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CHILD SAFE PRINCIPLES IS REGULARLY REVIEWED AND IMPROVED

TSA regularly reviews its implementation of the national principles at the individual, service and institutional level.

During 2020, child safety performance indicators were implemented for leaders, including compliance with screening processes and training requirements of personnel within their portfolio of responsibility. The review processes for managing concerns, complaints and incidents also identifies areas for improvement at an individual level.

TSA developed and piloted a safeguarding self-assessment tool for church leaders running programs and activities that engage children and young people. The self-assessment process is implemented by the Safeguarding Consultants who support the activity and program leaders to undertake the self-assessment, identify strengths and gaps, and create a plan to continue to improve safeguarding practice at a local service level.

During 2019, TSA implemented a Human Resource Management System (Workday). During 2020, TSA reviewed the data in Workday to ensure compliance with National Principle 5 including compliance with personnel screening requirements. This focus area will continue into 2021 as Volunteer Records are transferred to Workday.

The territorial policy suite was implemented as part of the merger of the two former territories in Australia during 2019 and 2020. Management of the territorial policies includes a process to review new policies 12 months after implementation of the policy. The aim of this initial review is to identify and address policy gaps in safeguarding and other key practice and quality areas. The 12-month review process was initiated towards the end of 2020 and will continue into 2021.

The Professional Standards Committee of the Board oversee the implementation of the child safe principles, and monitor compliance with TSA's Child and Youth Safety and Wellbeing Framework at an institutional level. This includes review and endorsement by the Board of key policies that reduce the risk of harm to children. During 2020, the Person of Interest policy was reviewed and approved by the Board. This policy addresses the principles and processes for managing concerning behaviours, allegations of child abuse and reportable conduct.

During 2020, a plan for implementation of Safeguarding Assurance Audits was developed and will be implemented in 2021.

#### Goals 2021

- 1 Implementation of the safeguarding self-assessment tool nationally
- 2 Implementation of the safeguarding audit schedule
- 3 Continuation of the initial 12-month policy review

## NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 10:

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES DOCUMENT HOW TSA IS SAFE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

TSA has adopted the national principles for child safe organisations within its Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Framework and policy.

Child and youth safety and wellbeing principles and safeguards have been included in multiple policies including but not limited to, the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy, the Code of Conduct, Recruitment and Onboarding Policy, Complaints Management and Incident Management policies, Lived Experience Policy, Quality Management Policy, Risk Management Policy, Person of Interest (Safeguarding) Policy, Inclusion and Diversity Policy and the Digital and Social Media Policy.

Child-friendly versions of TSA policies have been created and published on TSA's website including:

- Our commitment to your safety and wellbeing
- Code of Conduct Safety and Wellbeing
- What is child abuse?
- How to make a complaint

TSA understands that the lived experience of people it engages with and their active participation in its operation is invaluable

in achieving and maintaining safe and high-quality delivery of services, programs and activities. The safety and wellbeing, personal capacity and skills of clients, participants and beneficiaries are enhanced through participation. During 2020, TSA published its Lived Experience policy including the following commitments:

- The delivery of safe, person-centred, effective and seamless services, programs and activities
- Learning and continually improving services and advocacy based on the wisdom, insight and lived experience of others, particularly the people engaged in the delivery of its mission
- A rights-based approach, equipping and encouraging participation from all clients, participants, beneficiaries and other stakeholders
- Embedding equity and embracing diversity in its operations
- Involving clients, participants, beneficiaries, other stakeholders and TSA personnel to influence and participate in the development of TSA's operations, policies and processes and services that support this participation.

The implementation of the Lived Experience policy will include consultation with children, young people and their families and personnel who work with child and young people. The first review of the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy will include

consultation with children, young people, their families and personnel. The review of the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy was initiated in 2020 and will continue through 2021.

Development of the Australian Territory policies have included extensive consultation with personnel across the territory by the policy owners. The Executive Mission Council has reviewed all policies to ensure consistency with standards and practice across the territory prior to endorsement by the chief secretary.

Mandatory training modules support implementation of the policies related to child and youth safety. The training modules include questions that test understanding of the training and must be answered in order to complete the training.

In addition to training, Safeguarding Consultants are based in each TSA division to provide advice, training and guidance on implementing the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy. Toolkits have been built on TSA websites and include guides, frequently asked questions, tip sheets and a range of other tools to support implementation of the policy and procedures.

During 2021, a survey for personnel will be undertaken to measure the confidence and competence of TSA personnel in managing the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

#### Goals 2021

- 1** First-year review of the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and Framework
- 2** Implement the Lived Experience Policy including consultation and feedback from children, youth and their families in the review of the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy and Framework
- 3** Undertake a personnel survey to measure the confidence and competence of TSA personnel in managing the safety and wellbeing of children and young people



## **CONTACT DETAILS**

### **TSA website:**

[www.salvationarmy.org.au](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au)

Safeguarding Children and Young People resources are available under About Us – Governance and Policy: Safeguarding Children and Young People.