

DEFENCE YOUTH SAFETY

Youth safety is **everybody's** business...
...not just those who work directly with young people.

Why build a youth safe Defence?

Every 15 minutes



...a child is abused in Australia

Defence and the ADF Cadets take the care and protection of young people seriously. Defence has implemented a youth safety program called the **Defence Youth Safety Framework** that will better support young people to have a positive and safe experience in Defence.

The Defence Youth Safety Framework ensures a safety culture is properly embedded into Defence and the ADF Cadets. The Framework consists of four complementary streams: Governance, Assurance, Culture and Training.

The Defence Youth Safety Framework

is founded on the following principles derived from the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009 – 2020:

1. All youth under the age of 18 have the right to a safe environment.
2. Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is a Defence priority.
3. The best way to protect children is to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring in the first place.
4. The interests of any young person being abused or neglected or at risk of abuse or neglect are placed above the interests of any other individual or the organisation.
5. Defence values, supports and works in partnership with parents, guardians, specified next of kin and other agencies in fulfilling its youth safety responsibilities.
6. Youth safety policies and interventions are evidence based.

Youth safety governance focuses on consistent application of youth safety policies, procedures and practices across Defence and the ADF Cadets. This includes the implementation of the Commonwealth Child Safe Standards necessary for Defence to be considered a youth safe organisation.

The assurance element of the Defence Youth Safety Framework focuses on the development of a program and tool kit that includes a structured assurance program that provides:

1. the opportunity for Defence and the ADF Cadets to demonstrate their maturity as a youth safe organisation
2. confidence to those who are charged with governance responsibilities that practices that are meant to be occurring are actually occurring.



Defence and ADF Cadets aim to create an enjoyable and safe experience

Training empowers everyone

to understand, identify and manage risks. For this reason, the Defence Youth Safety Framework [training continuum](#) provides a tiered approach that is appropriate to role and responsibilities. The continuum comprises the following levels:

- Awareness
- Practitioner
- Leader
- Inquiry
- Youth/Young Adults

Each package is detailed in the [Training Guide](#).

A youth safe culture aims to create youth safe values, attitudes and behaviours.

Values — creating an environment where abuse of young people is not tolerated and actively identifying and managing youth protection risks.

Attitudes — providing education at all levels about Defence's values and helping people understand:

- what child abuse is
- that young people have a right to feel safe
- keeping the young person's best interests in mind at all times.

Behaviours — understanding the boundaries of what is and is not acceptable behaviour. Leading by example, encouraging, recognising and responding to risks, incidents or allegations of abuse.

Defence Youth Safety Partners

Defence partnered with [Bravehearts](#), one of Australia's leading child sexual abuse prevention organisations to develop the training packages. The broader Defence Youth Safety Framework was developed in partnership with Ernst & Young.



Want to know more? defence.youth@defence.gov.au