

Safeguarding Lead Position Description

POSITION TITLE	Safeguarding Lead
DEPARTMENT / INDUSTRY	Support Services
AWARD / AGREEMENT	TBC
CLASSIFICATION / GRADE	TBC

About YMCA South Australia

“We work together from a base of Christian values to provide opportunities for all people to grow in body mind and spirit” (our mission).

YMCA South Australia is a not-for-profit community organisation that has served the South Australian community for 175 years. With approximately 1,200 employees (and growing), we deliver programs and services across the state in settings including community recreation centres, swimming pools, health and fitness facilities, community centres, camps, early education and schools and youth services.

Our aim is to develop the whole person, helping all South Australians connect with a better life. Not only their physical fitness and capabilities, but also their sense of identity, purpose, hope and dignity; psychological health; resilience; social connectedness; lifelong learning; and their own contribution back into the community. All the elements that together constitute a full, healthy, productive, and satisfying life.

Our updated vision (FY27-30) is **“Whole people. Strong communities. South Australia flourishing.”**

The Y Factor

YMCA South Australia’s culture is characterised by what we call “the Y Factor” – **“genuine care for the whole person, for every person.”** This ethos runs deep at the Y, being evident in our rich history of positive change around the world. This kind of authentic concern for others opens the opportunity for deeper and more profound impact – both on the community’s wellbeing and our own as staff and volunteers. The YMCA is an environment in which everyone is to be recognised and appreciated as the unique and inherently valuable person they are. A place in which every person can “grow in body, mind and spirit”.

For further information regarding YMCA South Australia, please visit www.sa.ymca.org.au.

Position Summary and Requirements

The Safeguarding Lead sits at the heart of YMCA SA's commitment to safeguarding children and adults at risk, operating as the organisation's senior practice leader and trusted advisor on child safeguarding. The role provides expertise, oversight and evidence-informed guidance needed to embed best practice across a diverse, child focused organisation, drawing on safeguarding data, research, regulatory reform and emerging sector practice to inform organisational decision-making and drive continuous improvement. The Safeguarding Lead serves as the organisation's lead advisor on child safeguarding, providing evidence informed guidance to all staff on safeguarding matters of varying complexity.

They champion a proactive, safeguarding culture across YMCA SA by modelling best practice, influencing organisational behaviours and embedding safeguarding values into everyday operations to promote the safety and wellbeing of every child in all programs and services. The Safeguarding Lead keeps the organisation continuously audit ready against National and International Standards for safeguarding children and adults at risk, with high attention to detail, accurate documentation and a strong safeguarding culture at the centre of the role.

Areas of accountability	Key duties	Role %*
Safeguarding Incident Management	• Triage and process incoming safeguarding incidents ensuring appropriate action is initiated promptly. • Manage incidents through their full lifecycle including: ○ provide ongoing support to staff and managers ○ assist staff with Child Abuse Reporting Line (CARL) reporting as needed ○ advise on required actions ○ document learnings • Escalate incidents as required and form part of the organisational response team. • Build staff capability in incident reporting and management through education and reflective practice as required.	20%
Compliance and Risk	• Maintain contemporary knowledge of relevant child safety legislation, regulatory guidance, child safe and adults at risk standards, research, sector trends, industry partner requirements and emerging safeguarding risks, and translate these into practical organisational advice, compliance measures and improvement actions. • Compile and maintain evidence of compliance, identifying gaps and developing practical resources and improvement actions to address them. • Keep compliance evidence current and audit ready, so every commitment made in a policy can be substantiated on request.	20%

	- Review and update safeguarding policies as required through legislative or practice changes. - Maintain a current safeguarding policy register and ensure every policy is reviewed on or before its due date. - Support updating the Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement as required. - Update and maintain the Safeguarding Risk Register, using incident data, assurance findings, feedback, complaints, site-level observations and emerging sector risks to identify trends, inform controls and drive continuous improvement.	
Resource and Project Management	- Lead external Safeguarding accreditation processes including engaging with relevant internal stakeholders, compiling and presenting evidence, addressing gaps, preparing the organisation for accreditation, readying staff for assessor interviews, reporting on progress throughout and tracking actions to closure within required timeframes. - Maintain a central, version-controlled library of safeguarding resources that is visible and easy to retrieve across all sites and assist staff to develop site-specific resources as required. - Maintain the safeguarding action plan, drawing on internal safeguarding meetings, QIP content, Y Safeguarding meetings, emerging priorities and informed by the voice and lived experience of children and young people. - Lead safeguarding projects and initiatives, including new approaches that deliver practical impacts for programs and services. - Initiate organisation wide engagement. - Ensure internal and public visibility of safeguarding.	20%
Safeguarding Practice, Intelligence and Continuous Improvement	- Maintain contemporary knowledge of safeguarding research, legislative reform, regulatory guidance, sector trends and emerging risks, and translate these into practical recommendations for YMCA SA. - Analyse safeguarding data and intelligence, including incident reports, complaints, audit outcomes, assurance findings, training data, child and family feedback, staff feedback, site visit themes and risk register trends, to identify patterns, gaps, emerging risks and opportunities for improvement. - Lead a continuous improvement approach to safeguarding by ensuring lessons from incidents, near misses, feedback and assurance activity inform updates to policy, procedure, training, communications, supervision, risk controls and operational practice. - Prepare clear insights, themes and recommendations for senior leaders, the Board, Risk and Governance Committee and internal working groups to support evidence-informed decision-making.	20%

	• Monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding improvement actions, including whether agreed controls have been implemented, embedded and are improving practice outcomes. • Support a culture of organisational learning by sharing de-identified themes, practice insights and improvement opportunities with leaders and teams in a way that strengthens capability and accountability. • Contribute to the development of safeguarding resources, tools and practice guidance that reflect contemporary evidence, child-safe practice and the voice and lived experience of children and adults at risk.	
Reporting	• Prepare meaningful monthly safeguarding reports for the Senior Management Team, Risk and Governance Committee and the Board, including key themes, trend analysis, risk insights, progress against improvement actions and recommendations to strengthen safeguarding practice. • Attend Senior Management Team, Sub-Committee or Board meetings as required. • Ensure safeguarding evidence and improvement actions cascade into the organisation's integrated reporting, with appropriate visibility to the Board. • Lead the Safeguarding Quality Improvement Plan process, ensuring actions are informed by data, assurance outcomes, incident learnings, feedback, regulatory changes and emerging practice priorities.	10%
Collaboration and Engagement	• Develop relationships as a trusted advisor in the safeguarding space. • Participate in and contribute to Community Of Practice meetings with the Y Safeguarding Lead Group. • Facilitate regular internal safeguarding meetings. • Communicate safeguarding activity, updates and learnings across the organisation through development of material for staff meetings, newsletters and other appropriate channels.	5%
Staff Support	• Inspire, coach and mentor managers and teams across YMCA SA, fostering a culture of accountability, reflective practice and continuous improvement in safeguarding. • Support the safeguarding lifecycle for employees, including: ○ contributing to job advertisements ○ interview and reference questions ○ position description content ○ pre-employment clearances (WWCC, NPC) ○ induction and ongoing training ○ regular safeguarding updates and discussions in team meetings. • Identify and facilitate relevant training opportunities for staff, proactively or in response to specific incidents or identified gaps.	5%

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	Direct support of operational teams during peak periods, through particularly complex cases, or heavy external audits/assessments	
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*Role % is over an estimate over a 3-year accreditation cycle and will vary within individual years

Key Relationships

Reporting to:	Head of Development and Risk
Direct Reports:	N/A
Key Internal Relationships:	YMCA South Australia staff and volunteers YMCA staff nationally
Key External Relationships:	Patrons and key stakeholders of YMCA South Australia

Selection Criteria

Qualifications and Licences – Essential

- National Criminal History Records Check (NCHRC) (must be within 6 months of issue date).
- International police check (for applicants who have worked overseas in the last 5 years).
- Current South Australian Employment Working with Children Check (WWCC).
- RRHAN-EC Masterclass – Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education & Care
- National Child Safety Training ECEC – Foundations of Child Safety Training - Courses 1&2

Desired Knowledge and Experience

- Working knowledge of Early Childhood Education and Care regulations and reporting requirements (Essential experience)
- Previous experience in a child safeguarding, child protection, or closely related role, including managing incidents and concerns.
- Contemporary knowledge of child safety legislation, regulatory frameworks and accreditation standards, with the ability to translate these into practical organisational guidance.
- Proven ability to analyse safeguarding data, identify trends and risks, and drive evidence-informed continuous improvement.
- Experience preparing reports and recommendations for senior leaders, governance committees or boards.
- Demonstrated ability to interpret research and emerging sector practice and apply it to policy, procedure and resource development.

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- Strong communication skills, including the ability to engage with empathy in difficult situations, summarise complex information for varied audiences, and build trust with internal and external stakeholders.
- Experience designing and delivering training to diverse internal audiences.
- Values-driven approach to leadership, with a track record of coaching, mentoring and fostering accountability and reflective practice in others.
- Ability to work effectively in a complex, multi-site service delivery environment, managing competing priorities with sound judgement.
- Attention to detail and accuracy, with the discipline to keep documentation, registers and evidence current and audit ready.
- Experience preparing for or supporting external accreditation or audit processes, including evidence collation and managing review timeframes.
- Demonstrated ability to analyse incident, compliance, assurance and feedback data to identify trends, risks and continuous improvement opportunities.
- Demonstrated ability to interpret research, regulatory guidance and emerging sector trends and translate them into practical safeguarding advice.
- Experience developing evidence-informed recommendations for senior leaders, governance committees or boards.
- Strong understanding of continuous improvement methodology, including root cause analysis, action tracking, monitoring effectiveness and embedding organisational learning.
- Ability to support child-safe culture through practice leadership, coaching, critical reflection and system improvement.

Personal Attributes

- Demonstrates a commitment to the YMCA's mission and can role-model the "Y Factor" to others.
- Creates a fun and exciting work atmosphere that is hardworking and goal orientated.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a team.
- Creates a welcoming atmosphere by engaging all people in a friendly and approachable manner.
- Works as part of a team and shows professionalism.
- Punctual in both attendance on shift and attendance at staff meetings.
- Promptly responds to staff and customers' needs or concerns.
- Recognises and acts on the need for support and will accept and delegate responsibility when required.
- Models, demonstrates and teaches positive values like caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.
- Maintains high standards of personal presentation.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

For young people to be inspired, they must Feel Safe and Be Safe. As part of our Safeguarding Strategy at the Y, we have developed our Safeguarding Framework which aspires to ensure that all Children and Young People are safe and feel safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.

Our Safeguarding Framework aims to develop:

- A safe culture nationally which empowers Children and Young People by promoting Children and Young Person focused leadership and governance.
- Safe operations to ensure Y People have the right policies, processes and practices to keep Children and Young People safe; and
- Safe environments at the Y and in communities which empower Children and Young People to thrive.

All Y People are integral to ensuring the implementation of our Safeguarding Framework across the Y. Y People in Direct Contact Roles will do this by:

- Upholding the rights of and always acting in the best interest of Children and Young People.
- Fulfilling your responsibilities under safeguarding legislation within your State, including declaring anything you become aware of through the course of your engagement with the Y which a reasonable person would consider could impede your suitability to have contact with Children and Young People.
- Supporting your colleagues, supervisors and/or direct reports to understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation.
- Participate in all required Safeguarding Children and Young People training for your role.
- Report any suspicions, concerns, allegations or disclosures of alleged child abuse or neglect in line with policies and procedures.
- Actively participate and contribute to continuous improvement of Safeguarding policies, procedures and practices.
- Maintaining appropriate vetting checks including, but not limited to, Working with Children Checks (or equivalent), National Police Check and International Police Check (as required).
- Support the facilitation of safe operations to ensure Y people have the right policies, processes, and practices to keep children and young people safe.
- Speaking up about any safeguarding risks and/or concerns to ensure that you are supporting the continuous improvement of our spaces and safeguarding practice.
- Complete appropriately detailed risk assessments to address any vulnerabilities to children and young people as required.
- Empower all children and Young People to have a voice particularly in matters that affect them.
- Actively educate, promote and advocate the protection and safety to all children and young people, families and their communities.

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Work Health and Safety

You will be required to:

- Familiarise yourself with all policies, procedures, and work practices of YMCA South Australia.
- Maintain currency of knowledge in relation to work health and safety.
- Maintain a working knowledge and understanding of your centre's Emergency Action Plan.
- Take responsibility for your own health and safety and the safety of the work environment.
- Ensure that your actions and omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons.
- Comply with all reasonable instructions in relation to work health and safety, including YMCA South Australia's policies and procedures as amended from time to time.
- Assist YMCA South Australia to provide an inclusive workplace by adhering to YMCA South Australia's Access and Inclusion Policy and applicable equal opportunity laws as amended from time to time.
- Inform your manager of any issues or concerns that may affect your ability to perform your role safely.
- Promote a positive safety culture by contributing to the health and safety consultation, communication, and action.
- Respond to plant and building emergencies and act as chief warden in an emergency evacuating the Centre if required.

Approval of Position Description

Date created or revised:	9/9/26
Approved by:	Colin Organ, Head of Development and Risk

Acknowledgement of Incumbent

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the requirements of this position.

Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	