

Child Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report – FY2025

1.1 Embedding a Culture of Child Safety

SSI has made significant progress in embedding child safety and wellbeing across its leadership, governance structures, and organisational culture. For the 2025 financial year, 25 key deliverables were identified, with the Child Safety Team and Child Safe Working Group demonstrating tireless commitment and collaboration to achieve meaningful outcomes.

Throughout FY2025, SSI engaged with more than 3,000 children across a broad range of programs and initiatives. These interactions took place in four distinct ways, reflecting the depth and diversity of SSI's engagement with children and young people:

1. Children as direct beneficiaries through programs such as the Multicultural Child and Family Programs (MCFP), Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS), Humanitarian Services Program (HSP), Local Area Coordination LAC, NDIS Coordination and Psychological Support, Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS), Employment programs with youth caseloads, and Domestic and Family Violence services.

2. Children as part of a family unit receiving services through programs such as Humanitarian Settlement Program, Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS), Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) and Employment Services.

3. Children indirectly connected to individuals receiving services through programs such as NDIS Coordination and Support, Ignite, DFV Support, and Community Engagement initiatives.

4. Children as community stakeholders through participation in Community Hubs, arts events, training sessions, and community development projects.

1.2 Key Achievements and Milestones

Of the 25 deliverables set for FY2025, SSI achieved over 90% implementation progress across its main areas of focus — Leadership, Governance & Culture; Children’s Rights; Workforce Engagement; and Complaints & Concerns.

Key highlights include:

- A public commitment to child safety, prominently displayed across SSI’s website and platforms.
- Establishment of a safeguarding committee, ensuring child safety remains a standing item on governance agendas.
- Strengthened recruitment processes embedding child-safe practices and probity requirements.
- Comprehensive review and enhancement of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, reaffirming SSI’s dynamic and proactive approach to safeguarding.
- A functional Child Wellbeing page on SSI’s intranet providing child safety updates and serving as a central resource for child safety information.

Beyond meeting regulatory requirements, SSI has implemented robust recruitment, screening, induction, and training programs. Mandatory training and ongoing professional development ensure all staff and volunteers uphold their child safety responsibilities.

1.3 Performance Overview

Principle	Progress	Key Achievements
Leadership, Governance & Culture	93%	• Public commitment to child safety with accessible contact and complaints information. • Safeguarding committee established with child safety as a standing agenda item. • Policies and risk assessment frameworks reviewed and updated. • Child safety embedded as a reporting item in the board report.
Children’s Rights	100%	• Venue checklists developed to ensure child-friendly and safe environments.
Workforce Engagement	100%	• Comprehensive child-safe recruitment and screening, including Working with Children

		Checks and tailored reference questions. • Mandatory training and induction for all staff and volunteers. • Recruitment policies reviewed and standardised across states and territories.
Complaints & Concerns	90%	• Child-focused complaints handling policy reviewed and updated. • Privacy and incident management policies enhanced to strengthen responses and ensure appropriate information sharing.
Review & Improvement	100%	• Regular reviews conducted, and findings shared. • Systemic issues identified through complaints analysis to drive continuous improvement.

1.4 Strengthening Leadership, Rights, and Workforce Engagement

SSI continues to actively promote children's rights, ensuring young people are informed, empowered, and involved in decisions that affect them. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the skills and confidence to engage respectfully and effectively with children, while risks are proactively identified and mitigated across all sites.

1.5 Impact

- Safeguarding principles continue to be integrated into leadership, governance, recruitment, and training processes.
- Policies and procedures undergo regular review and refinement, ensuring accountability and responsiveness.
- Transparency and communication have been prioritised, with safeguarding information easily accessible to all stakeholders.
- Performance tracking systems monitor progress, ensuring momentum toward sustained improvement.

1.6 Looking Ahead: FY2026 Priorities

Exciting new initiatives are underway to further advance SSI's safeguarding framework:

- The Child Safe Code of Conduct, now in final approval stages, will guide all staff in appropriate conduct when engaging with children. The next steps will be to launch and embed the Child Safe Code of Conduct and supporting guidelines.
- The Child Safety Strategy, a concise and practical document, will map the next phase of safeguarding action and accountability.
- Expanded collaboration with child safety peak bodies will enhance training and capability building across the organisation.
- Develop an updated online Child Safety Refresher Course for staff and volunteers.
- Maintain regular audits, reviews, and transparent reporting to support a culture of continuous improvement.

1.7 Conclusion

SSI's unwavering commitment to safeguarding children and young people continues to define its purpose and practice. Substantial progress has been achieved across leadership, governance, rights promotion, workforce development, and review processes. As SSI moves into FY2026, its focus remains steadfast — to build safe, inclusive, and empowering environments for all children and young people, ensuring child safety is not just a compliance requirement, but a core organisational value.