

BUSINESSES

Businesses play their part to protect and care for children and young people in their community by supporting family friendly environments and sponsoring local community organisations.

Ensure conditions of employment value parents and families. Parental and carers' leave recognises the importance of parents having time to build relationships with newborns, to care for children and support each other. Such conditions show that you value your staff as parents as well as employees.

Have flexible, family friendly work conditions and job share available to staff who are parents and carers. Flexibility allows parents to meet the needs of their family, and better cope in times of stress.

Partner with a local community organisation or school to support children and families. For example, sponsoring a children's sporting activity increases opportunity for families to be involved in their community.

Be family-friendly and welcome children, for example smiling at and acknowledging children through to providing a play area, that can be supervised by parents or staff, and provide baby change facilities in your business. This recognises the place of children in our society and improves families' access to your business.

If you work with children and young people, develop policies and procedures to guide you and your employees: a child protection policy should promote wellbeing and early intervention practices, as well as be consistent with state/territory mandatory reporting legislation. Ensure and verify that all staff and volunteers engaged in child related work hold a valid Working With Children Check.

Also, a code of conduct for working with children and young people is a practical tool for promoting clear and consistent roles and behaviour. When implemented and supported consistently, these policies work to protect children, workers and the organisation.

Think about safe and respectful ways to be an active bystander if you see an adult being inappropriate towards a child or young person.

Apply for Family or Child Friendly Business Awards to have your efforts acknowledged. This will help raise the profile of child friendly businesses and increase understanding that protecting children is everyone's business.

