



# POLITICIANS

**Politicians play their part to protect and care for children and young people in their community by promoting child protection as a community responsibility and endorsing family friendly policies.**



**Be a positive role model.** Be aware of your behaviour, what you say, how you say it and the way you act. Children and young people learn from the people they listen to, so make your influence positive!

**Be aware that child abuse occurs across all communities and cultural groups.** Promote child protection and spread the word that child abuse prevention is everyone's business.

**Follow the principle of the environmental impact model,** consider the impact of all legal, policy and service delivery reform on children. Ask yourself: where are the children in this change?

**Become informed on the link between abuse and prevention of abuse.** Ask for briefings which include information from child abuse prevention experts and be well-informed on the latest research.

**Promote a long term view to child safety and wellbeing** by addressing the overloading of child protection, health, housing and education systems. Invest in prevention strategies and early intervention services to reduce the risk of families' problems worsening over time and heading into a cycle of abuse.

**Endorse family friendly policies across the workforce.** Flexible work hours, job sharing and the provision of paid Parental Leave demonstrates that members of society are valued as parents as well as employees.

**Implement universal home visiting to families at the birth of their first child.** Support to new families at this time has been shown by the David Old's model to prevent health and developmental problems for children.

**Listen to and engage with the opinions of youth delegations.** Refer to Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: Children have the right to express their opinions freely, and have their opinions taken into account in matters that affect them.

**Encourage organisations that work with children and young people to develop child-safe policies and procedures** and have all staff trained in Child Safe Organisation practices. A child protection policy should promote wellbeing and early intervention practices, as well as be consistent with state/territory mandatory reporting legislation, including ensuring that all staff and volunteers engaged in child related work hold a valid Working With Children Check.

**A code of conduct for working with children and young people is another 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.