

Working with Children at Landcare Events

how the new Working With Children Check affects Landcare

From time to time, many Landcare groups conduct activities involving children. Legally speaking, a 'child' refers to any person less than 18 years of age.

In June 2013, the new Working With Children Check came into being in NSW. It is more comprehensive than the previous Check and provides better protection for children. The new model is also consistent with other state and territory checks.

WHO NEEDS A CHECK?

Under the NSW legislation, if you are involved in an organisation that provides services for children, including events such as tree planting, enviro-education, school visits and community working bees, where you come in **face-to-face contact** with children, you must undergo a Working With Children Check.

Importantly, the check applies to all staff, both paid or voluntary.

WHAT DOES A CHECK INVOLVE?

A Working With Children Check involves a national police check + review of findings of misconduct involving children, and the result is either a clearance to work with children for five years, or a bar against working with children.

If the outcome is a clearance, your check will be **valid for five years** for any child-related work in NSW. If it is a volunteer-class Check, it may only be used for unpaid work.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A CHECK

The NSW Office of the Children's Guardian website provides an online application at <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/apply/apply>. The check also includes a Proof of Identity check, which can be completed at a NSW motor registry.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

For paid staff, the cost is \$80. The check remains free for volunteers and students, along with those employed as childcare or care providers.

EXEMPTIONS

There are exemptions from the Working With Children Check, which can be found at <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/about-the-check/exemptions>

In effect, at \$80 for 5 years, the check costs \$16 / year, and is a relatively inexpensive risk management tool for Landcare Groups and Networks.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The NSW Office of the Children's Guardian website provides information and factsheets involving working with children. Visit <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>

DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of January 2017. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Landcare NSW or the user's independent advisor.

Landcare in a Box: an initiative of the National Landcare Network, resourced by the NSW Landcare Support Program and funded by NSW DPI.



Department of
Primary Industries

