

# Child Safety Interview Questions

The inclusion of child safety questions signals to the applicant that child safety is a central consideration in their engagement with the parish, agency or entity and that the organisation takes its responsibilities seriously. This may act as a deterrent to persons who are unsuitable to work with children and young people.

In responding to these questions, applicants reveal important information about their skills, abilities, personality and attitudes relevant to working and/or having contact with children and young people.

The number and depth of interview questions will vary depending on the inherent level of involvement with children and young people specific to the role.

## EXAMPLE CHILD SAFETY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### MOTIVATION TO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- What has motivated you to apply for this role/ministry with children/young people?
- What motivates you to work in this program?

### SKILLS, EXPERIENCE AND/OR QUALIFICATIONS TO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- What relevant experience, skills or qualifications do you bring to this role?

### PREVIOUS INVOLVEMENT WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Have you worked/volunteered with children and/or young people before? What was most rewarding about working with children? What was most challenging?
- Can you tell me about any work or involvement that you have had with children and young people in your community or family? What strengths do you bring to working with children?
- How would children or young people you have worked with describe you?
- Please tell us about your experience working with children and young people (and their families) from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Please tell us about your experience working with children and young people with a disability.
- What strategies do you use to communicate and engage with children and young people of differing ages?

### WORKING SAFELY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Your position description mentions a commitment to the safety of children and young people. It also contains a link to the .....Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. What does child safety mean to you?
- What elements contribute to a safe and caring environment for children and young people?
- How do you see yourself demonstrating a commitment to child safety through your actions and interactions with children and young people?
- Please give three examples of how you have worked or interacted safely with children in the past.
- What boundaries have you put in place when working with children and young people?
- How would you describe appropriate professional boundaries in the context of this role?
- What is your understanding of child protection?
- .....is a child safe organisation. What do you think that means?

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- What qualities have you observed in others that you have admired, particularly with relating to their work with or care of children?
- Give me an example of how you have worked with a young person or child who is being disruptive. What did you learn about yourself in this process?
- How do you keep parents and carers informed and involved in the program?

## ENCOURAGING THE PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Describe strategies that you use when engaging with children and young people. Give practical examples.
- Can you describe a situation where you had to encourage a child to participate in a group activity?
- How have you responded to children who did not want to participate in an activity?
- How would you encourage children's participation and voice in our programs?
- How would you respond to a child (or a group of children) who were not listening to your instructions?
- How would you create a child safe and friendly space for an activity for young children/older children/children with a disability?
- How might you build trust and understanding with children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?
- How might you actively listen and involve children and young people of differing ages in decision-making?

## SUPERVISION

- Can you tell me about a situation in which you were supervised effectively? What did you value about the person's approach to supervision?
- Have you managed a difficult situation with a supervisor? How did you handle it?
- How do you feel about being supervised?

## SUITABILITY TO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Have you ever been investigated for a workplace misconduct incident related to work with children and young people?
- Do you possess any criminal convictions or findings of improper or unprofessional conduct through disciplinary action that may impact your suitability to work with children and young people?
- Have you ever been charged or convicted of a criminal offence that may impact your ability to perform this role e.g. serious driving offences, child-related offences, violence?
- Tell us about a time when you were under pressure and remained calm, compassionate and focussed.

## RESPONDING AND REPORTING

- Have you ever been concerned about the welfare of a child or young person you have had contact with? What did you do?
- If you were concerned about the actions or behaviour of a co-worker towards children, how would you respond?
- Have you ever faced an ethical dilemma in the workplace? If so, what was the issue and what did you do?
- What action would you take if a child disclosed to you that they were feeling unsafe?
- Have you had to deal with a situation where there was bullying? What did you do?

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## POSSIBLE RED FLAGS

- Unexplained employment gaps
- Unstable work history and vague reasons for leaving roles/employment
- Motivations to work with children that relate to financial interests e.g. “I need a job”, status of the position, “rescuing” children and young people e.g. “I love kids, I want to take them all home”, based on the needs of the adult e.g. “I was never close to my own children, but I think I can be close to these kids”, “I have time on my hands and don’t really know what to do with myself”.
- History of conflict and difficulties with relationships in the workplace
- Difficulties following policies, procedures and/or direction
- Working outside the boundaries of a role e.g. social contact with children who were part of a program, lending money, buying gifts
- Defensiveness
- Angry responses
- Evasiveness in relation to interview questions
- Lack of referees or inappropriate referees

Sources - adapted from:

Sample interview questions – Catholic Professional Standards Limited

[https://www.cpsltd.org.au/media/1403/514-interview-questions-ed1\\_2019.pdf](https://www.cpsltd.org.au/media/1403/514-interview-questions-ed1_2019.pdf)

Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade 2018, Child Protection Guidance Note: Recruitment and Screening, May, p. 5



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