

# The EPIC Project - Beyond Safety: Ethical Practice Involving Children

(ARC Discovery Project DP180100465)



The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse clearly identified children’s safety in institutions as an area requiring urgent attention. **This research aims to strengthen knowledge, policy and practice concerning ‘child-safe’ organisations by identifying the role of *ethical practice* in improving children’s safety and wellbeing.** Focusing especially on those who are at greater risk of harm, the findings will help ensure current efforts are not reduced to compliance-based exercises that protect organisations, but fail to create the cultural conditions necessary to nurture and protect children.

In line with the CCYP Research Approach, this research will include the views of children and young people in helping to develop better-targeted policy and more ethically-oriented practice in working with children.

## Research Design

This research is taking a mixed method approach, incorporating relational ethics and recognition theory, along with Childhood Studies and its emphasis on children’s rights, to understand the role of relationships in different organisational contexts, as well as the personal, cultural and systemic issues that limit and enable ethical practice.

### The study is being conducted in four phases:

**Phase 1:** A detailed comparative analysis will be undertaken of child-safe discourse in relevant policy documents and practice guidelines in different international jurisdictions.

**Phase 2:** Qualitative fieldwork, involving interviews and focus groups, with children and practitioners will explore understandings and experiences of ethical practice and ethical decision-making.



**Phase 3:** A quantitative online survey will test the findings of Phase 2 with a larger sample of children and practitioners in a wider range of education, out-of-home care and disability settings.

**Phase 4:** Professional development and dissemination of findings.

### Research Team

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