

Sanctuary

A workplace culture-change program



The Sanctuary Model is a blueprint for organisations to build safe communities that help people to heal from trauma.

What is Sanctuary?

Sanctuary is a trauma-informed, whole-culture model that provides a clear and structured approach for creating or changing an organisational culture. Sanctuary encourages us to rethink the way we manage conflict resolution and crisis intervention. It supports staff to create a culture that prioritises safety and wellbeing at every level within the workplace.

Benefits and outcomes

Implementing the Sanctuary Model results in improved outcomes for both organisations and clients. When fully embedded, organisations can expect to see improved communication and morale among staff; fewer incidents of violence; and reduced turnover. Clients will benefit from fewer trauma symptoms; enhanced social skills; and an improvement in their judgment and decision-making; personal relationships, academic performance, and ability to maintain safety.

How does Sanctuary work?

By focusing on safety, Sanctuary supports staff and clients to learn to cope more effectively with stress, and understand how to respond to and heal from trauma. The Sanctuary Model is based around four key domains:

- 1. Shared knowledge** – Promoting resilience in the workplace by educating and empowering staff to understand and implement trauma theory
- 2. Shared values** – The Sanctuary Commitments provide the backbone for creating safe environments where staff members feel respected and supported
- 3. Shared language** – By utilising the SELF Framework as a problem-solving framework, organisations can safely navigate complex situations and actively promote staff and team wellbeing
- 4. Shared practice** – The Sanctuary Toolkit comprises a range of practical skills that enable individuals and organisations to more effectively respond to difficult situations, build community and develop resilience to cope with adversity and trauma.



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What sets us apart?

Sanctuary recognises that trauma has an impact not only on the people who have experienced it, but also on the staff who work with them and organisations as a whole. Where some trauma models focus only on the clients being served by the organisation, Sanctuary drives a whole-organisation culture that strengthens the emotional wellbeing and resilience of staff, and those they work with.

Staff working with those who have faced adversity or are in crisis face many challenges and stressors. Overly stressed organisations may even begin to spend more time reacting to crises than planning for the future and may constantly feel like they are "playing catch up". Sanctuary teaches leaders and managers to recognise these warning signs and reverse destructive patterns to place the focus back on healing, support, and client welfare.

Equipping you for change

Sanctuary is agile, adaptable and recognises that organisations have their own culture, values, processes and policies. By integrating with your organisation's strategic plan, Sanctuary strengthens and underpins the culture and processes that promote and drive wellbeing and safety.

Organisation wide culture change: Experience has shown that the real benefits of Sanctuary are experienced when organisations adopt a system-wide roll out. A large-scale approach, that targets all levels of leadership, is critical in creating a sustainable organisation-wide culture change initiative. The MacKillop Institute offers a comprehensive three-year implementation and support program to ensure your success. This includes:

Year 1	Engaging	How the model will inform our organisation
Year 2	Embedding	Concrete application to proactive policies and procedures
Year 3	Evaluating	Ensuring Consistency

Short courses: The MacKillop Institute also offers short courses, retreats and masterclasses, covering key concepts and tools to help you get started. Our practitioners can tailor training to increase your trauma knowledge, cultural intelligence or implement specific tools within the model.

About Us

Mackillop Family Services

At MacKillop, we work for the rights of all children to be free to enjoy their childhood in a safe and loving home, where they are nurtured and have a sense of belonging and cultural identity. Our programs include foster, kinship and residential care; disability services; youth and homelessness support, alternative education schools and outreach; and early intervention support for families.


The MacKillop Institute


The MacKillop Institute delivers a suite of evidence-informed programs to government, community, educational and corporate organisations across Australia and internationally. Our aim is to build the capacity of these organisations to deliver best-practice, trauma-informed services to support children, young people and families who have experienced change, loss and trauma. Through the MacKillop Institute, we are sharing our experience of supporting vulnerable children and families to support you.

Get in touch

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