

Working With Children check for researchers

1.0 Working With Children Legislation

- 1.1 The *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WWC)* was passed by State Parliament on 26 November 2004, and was proclaimed on 1 January 2006.
- 1.2 For a copy of the legislation visit the State Law Publisher webpage:
<http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/default.html>
- 1.3 WWC Act is designed to screen those who hold positions of trust and authority in their work with children.

2.0 When WWC is required

- 2.1 Child-related work is defined in Section 6 of the WWC Act.
- 2.2 The WWC Act does not intend that every person who has any contact with a child requires a WWC Check. Only applicants who have contact or likely contact with a child in connection with at least one of the eighteen categories of child-related work listed in the WWC Act will be eligible for a WWC Card.

3.0 Examples of WWC categories for researchers

- 3.1 Some examples of where a WWC check might be required for researchers are listed below:

Category Number	Category Description	Examples of child-related work for researchers
1	A child care service	Researchers undertaking research involving contact with a child at a child care centre
2	A community kindergarten	Researchers undertaking research involving contact with a child at a community kindergarten
3	A education institution for children	Researchers undertaking research involving contact with a child at a school
8	A detention centre, as defined in the <i>Young Offenders Act 1994</i> section 3	Researchers undertaking research involving contact with a child at Banksia Hill Detention Centre
9	A community child health service	Researchers undertaking research involving contact with a child at a community child health service such as community child health centres
10	A counselling or other support service	Researchers undertaking research involving contact with a child at or as part of a counselling service
13	Award of a public or private hospital in which children are ordinarily patients	Researcher undertaking research involving contact with a child at a paediatric hospital or a paediatric ward of a hospital
15	An overnight camp, regardless of the type of accommodation or how many children are involved	Researchers undertaking research involving contact with a child at an overnight camp

4.0 FAQs

- 4.1 Do I require a WWC if I am conducting research in another Australian state or territory?
You are required to follow the legislation/s of the state or territory in which you are conducting research. If you are conducting research in an Australian state or territory outside of Western Australia you need to find out what you require to conduct research in children.
- 4.2 Do I require a WWC if I am overseas and conducting research in children who are overseas?
You may not need a WWC. For example, if you are a researcher with Curtin ethics approval and you are overseas, conducting research in children who are overseas you do not need a WWC. However, if you are organising a school trip for children in WA going overseas then you will need a WWC.
- 4.3 Who signs off on a WWC as the sponsor?
If you are a staff member the Head of School should sign off as the sponsor. If you are a student your supervisor or placement coordinator should sign off as the sponsor.
- 4.4 Do I need a WWC if I am conducting a survey over the phone with children?
Yes. This is considered "interaction" with a child.

- 4.5 Do I need a WWC if I am conducting research involving children via social media?
If you are interacting with a child through social media or through a blog etc., then you need a WWC. If you are observing behaviours and there is no interaction with the child then you do not need a WWC.
- 4.6 Do I need a WWC if children are participating in an online survey?
If there is no interaction with the child then you do not need a WWC. It is unlikely an online survey will require a WWC.
- 4.7 How long does it take to get a WWC?
Current (March 2015) processing times indicate 50% of applications are processed within two weeks, with 80% of applications processed within four weeks.
- 4.8 What do I need to provide to ethics if I am conducting research in children?
You can submit your receipt of your WWC application to ethics, and do not need to provide the full card.

5.0 Case studies of WWC

- 5.1 Joseph and Marianne will be studying the effectiveness of the Home and Community Care Program (HACC). Their work will involve observing HACC staff operating in homes with adult clients. Many of these clients have children who may be in the home when research is undertaken. Do Joseph and Marianne need a WWC?
No. A WWC is not required as they are not working with children.
- 5.2 Kerry and Eric hope to research babies' stress levels and one of their plans is to regularly undertake saliva testing to determine cortisol levels under different conditions. This research will be undertaken at the Curtin University Early Childhood Centre. Do Kerry and Eric need a WWC?
Yes. A WWC is required because they are researchers undertaking research involving contact with a child at a child care centre (Category 1).
- 5.3 Lorraine, Samantha and Kim plan to survey theatre goers following their exposure to certain movies from different genres. The surveys will be conducted in a private room immediately following the viewing at Hoyts Carousel. The survey participants will represent a cross-section of ages from 16 years to 80 years of age. All interviewers will be interviewing all age groups. Is a WWC required?
No. This research does not fall into any of the WCC categories.
- 5.4 Barry is conducting a face-to-face survey with first year Curtin students about their eating habits. Considering some of the participants Barry will recruit will be 17.5 years is a WWC required?
No. Even though Category 3 states "an education institution for children", a university does not fall into this category so Barry does not need a WWC.

6.0 Contacts

- 6.1 If you require more information on the WWC legislation please contact:

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