

Child Safe Sport

Children must be treated fairly, be free from discrimination and harassment, and be safe from any form of abuse while involved in sport and recreation activities.

The care and protection of children is a legal requirement, as well as a moral obligation, that requires commitment from everyone involved in all levels of sport to ensure sporting environments are safe and supportive for all children.

It includes a commitment to meeting legislative requirements, implementing procedures and practices that minimise the risks of harm, and the ability to appropriately respond to concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Child abuse is the mistreatment of a child or young person that has or is likely to cause harm. It is usually perpetrated by adults and often by an adult known and trusted by the child. The most common characteristics of abuse against a child are an abuse of power or authority, and/or a breach of trust.

Child abuse in sport can range from inappropriate touching when demonstrating techniques, inappropriate training methods that give extra physical loads to children as 'punishment', physical aggression when disciplining a child, through to sexual assault and sexual intercourse with a minor.

Child abuse usually occurs in a pattern or cycle of behaviour and is generally classified into one of

four categories: emotional/psychological abuse, physical abuse, neglect or sexual abuse/sexual misconduct.

Mandatory reporting

In Tasmania, all adults have a responsibility to look out for children and keep them safe; however, some adults have specific reporting responsibilities outlined in the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* (the Act).

Those required by law to report child abuse or neglect include medical practitioners, nurses, police officers, psychologists, social workers, school principals, teachers, people who manage child care services and people employed by or volunteering in government agencies or organisations funded by the Crown that provide health, welfare, education or care for children.

If a mandatory reporter believes, suspects or knows a child is being abused or neglected they must contact the Advice and Referral Line on 1800 000 123. If they don't, they may face penalties.

If you are not a mandatory reporter and have concerns for the safety or welfare of a child, call the Advice and Referral Line on 1800 000 123. A staff member will talk through your concerns and explore what can be done to help. If the child is at immediate risk and police or medical assistance is required call 000.

Registration to Work with Vulnerable People

In Tasmania it is mandatory for people in a position to influence a child or vulnerable person to obtain a Registration to Work with

Current as at November 2019



Vulnerable People. Further information can be found at www.cbos.tas.gov.au

Creating a child safe environment

Sporting organisations have a duty of care to provide child safe environments, minimise opportunities for child abuse to occur, and protect children from people who are identified as unsuitable to work with children.

Child safe sporting organisations embed child safety into leadership and culture, actively involve children and families in decision making, promote good risk management practices and have many measures in place to safeguard children.

Organisational practices

Organisations should implement the following practices to promote child safe environments:

- Develop and implement a policy on child safety and wellbeing and/or child safe environments, including a code of conduct for all staff, members and parents.
- Ensure policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and accessible.
- Provide regular education sessions to ensure everyone remains up to date with current policies and practices.
- Ensure that people who are required to hold Working with Vulnerable People registration do so prior to commencing.
- Have thorough and appropriate recruitment practices, including job descriptions for all roles (paid and voluntary), interviewing applicants, staff induction, ongoing training, development and monitoring.
- Appoint a Member Protection Information Officer who is the first point of contact for issues, concerns and complaints.
- Use currently accredited coaches and officials.

- Ensure the board, committee/s, coaches, administrators, volunteers, parents, participants and affiliated associations understand and comply with governance and legal requirements.
- Engage and involve young people and children in the development and maintenance of child safe environments.
- Adopt practices which promote diversity and inclusivity and are free of discrimination and harassment.
- Ensure complaint policies are written in plain English with clear processes.
- Ensure complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately, with escalation to relevant authorities as required.
- Discuss child safety regularly during meetings and training sessions.
- Actively educate members and promote child safe practices.
- Make a visual commitment to child safety with posters, brochures, social media posts, website links and articles, and newsletters.

Further information

Additional information and resources on child safety can be found at:

Play by the Rules www.playbytherules.net.au

Sport Australia www.sportaus.gov.au

National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect <https://www.napcan.org.au/>

Children and Youth Services
www.communities.tas.gov.au/children

Communities Sport and Recreation
<https://www.communities.tas.gov.au/csr>

Strong Families, Safe Kids
www.strongfamiliesafekids.tas.gov.au/