



Child Protection Policy

Document Record

Responsible Person		President	
Contact Officer		Welfare Officer	
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Statement of Commitment to Child Protection

Ashy Basketball Club Inc. (Our Club) is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children in sporting activities.

We support and respect all children, as well as our volunteers.

Our Club is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures.

We have a legal obligation to contact authorities when we are concerned about a child's safety.

Our Club applies standards aligned to Basketball Victoria's in the engagement of all volunteers including Coaches, Team Managers and members of the Committee of Management recognising that while the Working With Children Check (WWCC) is necessary it is not sufficient by itself to protect children from the risk of abuse.

Our Club ensures all volunteer coaches have valid Working with Children Checks as per our Club Policy and we are committed to regularly educating our volunteer members (Committee, Coaches, Team Managers and Parents) on child abuse risks

We have specific policies, and procedures in place that support our Committee of Management, and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

Our Children

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in Our Club. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our Club, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome and encouraged to participate. In particular we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.



1. Introduction

Everyone who participates in our Club's activities is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. Our Club has a legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people, coaches, , volunteers, and parents provide them with the highest possible standard of care.

Our Club is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone in sport accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children from harm and abuse. This means to follow procedures and codes of conduct to protect children and report any concerns about their welfare to appropriate authorities.

The aim of this policy is to promote good practice, provide children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of Ashy Basketball Club Inc. and to allow volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Child

The words 'child' and 'children' in this guide refer to children and young people up to the age of 18years. This definition is consistent with the national framework, Creating Safe Environments for Children – Organisations, Employees and Volunteers, the Commission for Children and Young People Act, the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 and the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005. The term 'child' in this guide is inclusive of anyone under 18 years of age. Not utilising the term 'young people' is not intended to diminish any emphasis on, or acknowledgement of, the safety risks to older children or teenagers.

Policy Statement

Our Club is committed to the following:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in basketball in a fun and safe environment
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- All suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All Ashy Basketball Club Inc. volunteers who work with children will be engaged with regard to their suitability for that role/responsibility, and will be provided with guidance and/or briefing in good practice and child protection procedures
- Working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children

2. Promoting Good Practice

To provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in basketball everyone must operate within an accepted framework such as the Child Safe Code of Conduct and other Club codes of conduct.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of volunteers or participants in basketball to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child.

Please refer to Our Club's Child Protection Procedures, located on our website to help you identify good practice and poor practice.



3. Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

Our Club is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children accessing our service. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times.

Our Club also promotes the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.

We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our Club, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome and encouraged to participate. In particular we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

4. Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

Our Club will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe and child-friendly the association is and to determine what additional strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children because of the action of a volunteer, committee member, parent, player or another person.

5. Ensure that volunteers, players, children and families/carers adhere to the Codes of Conduct

Our Club will ensure that all our volunteers, children and families are aware of and adhere to the Club's Codes of Conduct that specify standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with children, particularly those in the association's care. The association will also implement a code of conduct to address appropriate behaviour between children.

All Club members are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Codes of Conduct during a review cycle or by feedback to the committee.

6. Education

Education is important to ensure that everyone in Our Club understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our Club culture aims for all volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We educate our volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our volunteers through ongoing education to develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New volunteers will take part in an induction process to inform them about Our Club's child safety policies and procedure, including codes of conduct to ensure they understand our association's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.



7. Club Welfare Officer

It is not the responsibility of anyone volunteering resources and time at Our Club to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities so that they can then make inquiries and take necessary action to protect the young person. This applies to allegations/suspensions of abuse occurring within Our Club's activities and to allegations/suspensions that abuse is taking elsewhere.

Our Club will ensure that a Club Welfare Officer is appointed to look over matters concerning child safety and abuse. We expect our members and volunteers to discuss any concerns that they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the nominated Club Welfare Officer. The Club Welfare Officer will ensure that the concerns/incident reported to them will remain confidential and that the identity of the person reporting the concern/incident is not revealed.

The Club Welfare Officer will be required to report all the incidents noted by the Club to the appropriate authority at Basketball Victoria who will then ascertain whether or not the person/s involved in the incident play a role in the association and act accordingly.

8. Engagement of Volunteers

Our Club ensures that all reasonable steps are taken in order to engage suitable and appropriate people to assist with Club Administration, and coaching or managing children's basketball teams.

This is achieved using a range of checks such as Coaches expression of interest form, Working with children check, volunteer Coach and Team Manager Induction, member protection declaration and code of conduct sign-off. Such measures help us minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

We actively encourage applications from diverse backgrounds.

All people engaged in child-related work must abide with Our Club's WWC C policy and are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. Please see the [Working with Children Check](#) website for further information.

9. Onboarding, Induction and Education for Volunteers

Appointment of Coaches, Team Managers and Committee Members

Our members as defined in our Rules of Association generally consist of parents of players who volunteer as Coaches, Team Managers and Committee Members. Committee Members are nominated from the members of the association at the AGM.

All nominated volunteers will be appointed by the Committee of management via the Club's engagement process refer to section 8 and will receive formal or informal induction during which:

- They will be present for a briefing at the commencement of each season
- A check will be made that the Expression of Interest form has been completed in full
- Acknowledgement and understanding of the Position description
- Agreement and signed acceptance of Our Club's Member Protection Declaration and Child Safe Code of Conduct and other relevant Club Codes of Conduct
- Child Protection Procedures will be explained and education needs will be identified e.g. basic child protection awareness



10. Fair and Just Procedures for Volunteers

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to volunteers. The decisions we make when engaging volunteers, reporting incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an association take.

11. Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they are volunteers, committee members, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

12. Legislative Responsibilities

Our Club takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.¹
- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in Our Club will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.²
- Any members or volunteers who are mandatory reporters must comply with their duties.³

13. Risk Management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

14. Regular Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute.

¹ A person will not commit this offence if they have a reasonable excuse for not disclosing the information, including a fear for their safety or where the information has already been disclosed.

Further information about the failure to disclose offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence>.

² Further information about the failure to protect offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence>.

³ Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

See the Department of Health and Human Services website for information about [how to make a report to child protection](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first) <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first>.



15. Allegations, Concerns and Complaints

Our Club takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to manage and report promptly. Our volunteers are briefed to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above).

If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- A child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- Behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed⁴
- Someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- Observing suspicious behaviour.

16. Attachments

This document contains the following attachments:

- Attachment A: Child Protection Procedures
- Attachment C: Flow Chart of the Child Safety Reporting Process
- Attachment B: Child Safe Incident Report Form

⁴ For example of behaviour, please see [An Overview of the Victorian child safe standards:](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc)
<www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc>