

CHILD SAFETY IN NETBALL PROCEDURE

RESPONSIBILITIES – Aberfeldie Netball Club

Committee

- Ensure that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Protection Code of Conduct are in place.
- Review policies and procedures periodically for continued suitability.
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

President/Secretary/Treasurer

- Deal with and investigate reports of child abuse;
- Ensure that volunteers are aware of relevant laws, club policies and procedures, and Code of Conduct;
- Ensure that all adults within the Aberfeldie Netball Club community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;
- Ensure that all volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- Provide support to volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

Child Safety Officer

- Provide support to volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.
- First contact for our volunteers if they have observed any inappropriate behavior or suspected abusive activities towards a child.
- Report all matters raised to the Aberfeldie Netball Club President.
- Maintain strict confidentiality.

Coaches, Team Managers

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.
- Report any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities to the Aberfeldie Netball Club Child Safety Officer.

All **Volunteers** share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Be familiar with the Code of Conduct, and Aberfeldie Netball Club's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (police/child protection service) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters;
- Report any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities to the Aberfeldie Netball Club Child Safety Officer.

NEW VOLUNTEERS

The Aberfeldie Netball Club aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the club;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share the clubs values and commitment to protect children; and
- Prevent a person from volunteering at the club if they pose a risk to children.

All new volunteers will be required to provide a current Working With Children Check or equivalent.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

The Aberfeldie Netball Club must at all times:

Ensure that each adult (18 years and older) who seeks to hold, or currently holds, a position of responsibility or authority with children (under 18 years of age) must seek and maintain a valid working with children check or equivalent (current Victorian Institute of Teaching ID (VIT) or current serving Victorian Police Office ID or current serving Australian Federal Police (AFP) Officer).

A register will be maintained by the Committee.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Aberfeldie Netball Club will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach.

The Club has appointed a Child Safety Officer as a first point of contact.

REPORTING

Any volunteer who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the appropriate child protection service or the police. They should also advise the ANC Child Safety Officer.

In situations where the volunteer is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the Club Child Safety Officer.

Volunteers must report complaints of suspected abusive behaviour or misconduct to the Club Child Safety Officer and also to any external regulatory body such as the police.

INVESTIGATING

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to conduct an investigation of this report, volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the Club President will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the Club President may decide to conduct such an investigation. All volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The Club President will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time other member volunteers may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

After an initial review and a determination that the suspected abuse warrants additional investigation, the Club President shall coordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and / or law enforcement officials.

RESPONDING

If it is alleged that a member volunteer may have committed an offence or have breached the clubs policies or its Code of Conduct the person concerned may be stood down while an investigation is conducted.

If the investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities an offence (or a breach of the clubs policies or Code of Conduct) has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal or cessation of involvement with the club. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

PRIVACY

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. The Aberfeldie Netball Club will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

REVIEWING

Annually, and following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the club child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under the clubs care.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- ANC Child Protection Policy Statement
- ANC Child Safety Code of Conduct

DEFINITIONS

Child means a person below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Child protection means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

Child abuse means all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child.

Child sexual assault is any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually abusive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes child grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.

Reasonable grounds for belief is a belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

The child is in need of protection,

The child has suffered or is likely to suffer "significant harm as a result of physical injury",

The parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

- a)** A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed if: A child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- b)** A child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- c)** Someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- d)** Professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; and/or
- e)** Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.