

Child Safe Policy

Statement of Commitment

Our club fundamentally believes that all children have the right to a life that is free from harm. Our priority will always be the safety and wellbeing of children when they are engaging in activities within our club. We want children who participate in our club to have a safe and happy experience. We support and respect our children, their families and our volunteers.

Our policy aligns with and supports the National AFL policies around safeguarding children and young people. For full details on the comprehensive National Policy, Code of Conduct and Reporting please refer to the website.

<https://www.afl.com.au/policies>

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Our policy and Code of Conduct guides volunteers, club and committee members and families on how to behave when interacting and engaging with children in our club. The policy focuses on how we can build and maintain a child safe environment which is inclusive, transparent and promotes safe participation.
Context and rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The need for a policy of this nature is difficult for some to understand and it may seem easy to disregard, however, history and statistics tell us otherwise. As a club we urge you to understand and support the initiatives in this policy and code of conduct. Unfortunately people who do not have good intentions use sporting clubs to gain trust and ultimately access to children. We want to send clear messages that we have processes in place to be proactive in responding to this, and we have a culture of intolerance to this behaviour. We will keep our children safe.
Children's Voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Our club supports the active participation of children in AFL, and in sport generally. We view children as valuable members of our club and we understand that it is important for children to be listened to and to have avenues to raise concerns.
Ensuring appropriate adults are working with children in our club	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We will maintain Working with children check screening processes through the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian for all volunteers in the following positions: Coaches, Committee members (as decision makers on behalf of children), Canteen Coordinator, Team managersOther volunteers do not have access to children when without parents or other adults being present and therefore are not required to have a Working with children check. Examples may include: First aid officer, Canteen volunteers, Goal Umpires, Referees, Umpires, Runners
Complaints Management and Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All complaints, allegations and reports can be directed to the Child Safety Officer in the first instance. In the absence of the child safety officer, complaints, allegations and reports can be directed to the club president. Direct contact details are provided below.The following steps will be taken by the Child Safety Officer if an investigation is needed into a report or allegation (as suggested by 'Play by the Rules' https://www.playbytherules.net.au/about-pbtr):<ul style="list-style-type: none">Clarify basic details of the allegationReport allegations of a serious or criminal natureProtect the child/ren from ongoing or immediate danger where possible.Protect the alleged offender from victimisation (innocent until proven guilty)Follow the child protection authority or police requirementsManage the situation and communication while internal and / or external investigations take place.Implement disciplinary action as required

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any incidents, disclosures or reports that are of a serious or criminal nature will be reported to NSW Police immediately.• Any incidents, disclosures or reports will also be reported via the AFL's online reporting platform. The online reporting platform can be accessed via this link: https://eaf1.austfoot.com.au/afl-makeareport/#/landing• If a report or allegation is presented, the Child Safety Officer will seek support and advice from the Office of the Children's Guardian, the Department of Families and Communities and AFL South Coast and act accordingly on their advice regarding reporting.• Confidentiality is at the forefront of our complaints management and reporting. Communication will be managed by the Child Safety Officer and Club President in line with advice from government agencies and AFL South Coast.• If an allegation is made against a volunteer or club official, that volunteer or official may be stood down until an investigation and appropriate reporting can be followed up by the committee.• Allegations, reports or concerns can be raised by children and will be taken seriously, investigated and reported accordingly.• All adults in NSW are required to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child has been abused (Crimes Act 1900).• All volunteers and club members have a responsibility to keep children safe in our community by acting as advocates for them. It is important to speak up on behalf of children if you see or hear something that indicates that a child is at risk of harm. At any time concerns can be raised anonymously by calling:
Awareness and support for members and volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This policy will be shared annually with all families, members and volunteers through the clubs communication channels (eg. Team App).• The contact details for the Child Safety Officer will be made available through this policy to ensure that questions, clarifications, allegations and reports can be received from the club community easily and confidentially.• When opportunities arise, the Child Safety Officer will conduct presentations and / or training around this policy to raise awareness and understanding of current legislation and the club's policy and expectations (eg coaches information evening).• Child safety is a standing agenda item at committee meetings and all members and volunteers are encouraged to ask questions and contribute to the continuous improvement of child safe policies and practices in the club.
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This policy and code of conduct will be reviewed annually. Next review is due: Feb 2022
Definitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The definition of a child under this policy and Code of Conduct is any person who is not yet 18 years of age.

Contact details for 2021 Child Safety Officer

Kellie Grose Email kellie_grose@uow.edu.au

Current contact details for the 2021 Club President

Matt Phillips Email ndtjafcpresident@gmail.com

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<p>Expected Behaviours</p>	<p>This policy outlines positive behaviours that are expected to be adhered to by volunteers and club officials at all times. It also outlines concerning behaviours that can place children at risk. These concerning behaviours will not be tolerated within our club and may result in the need for investigations, reporting and disciplinary action.</p>
<p>Positive behaviours</p> <p>Our club members, volunteers and officials will:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat all children and young people with respect and take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse. • Raise concerns with the Child Safety Officer if risks to child safety are identified. • Ensure that they are never alone with children. Adults need to always be within sight and sound of other adults. • Report and act on any concerns or observed breaches of this Policy. • Consider strategies, together with families, if there are situations that need to be safely managed that are outside the boundaries of this Code of Conduct. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if driving a child to training or a game, try to have other children or adults present so that they are not alone with a child other than their own. Ask the child to sit in the back of the car. • if a child is collected late from training text the family immediately to explain the need for the child to be collected on time (contact details are on Team App) • if a younger child needs to use the bathroom, check the bathroom is empty and then ask the child to use the bathroom while they wait outside. • Take a child seriously if they disclose harm or abuse. • Offer children privacy in change rooms. • Engage in appropriate physical contact that supports children’s safety and wellbeing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting to develop, or demonstrating, sports skills or techniques. • Responding to an injury. • Preventing an injury. • Hand shaking, high fives or a tap on the back to offer encouragement or congratulations.
<p>Concerning behaviours</p> <p>Our club members, volunteers and officials will not:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards children, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or grooming. • Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse. • Engage in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporal punishment, such as smacking or other forms of physical discipline. • Initiating, permitting or requesting unacceptable physical contact with a child or young person, such as massages or kisses. • Facilitating situations which unnecessarily result in close physical contact with a child or young person, such as wrestling or tickling. • Undertaking a task of a personal nature for a child if they can do it for themselves, such as changing clothes. • Verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear or intimidation. • Offer children and young people alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs. • Show children pornographic images, use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children. • Encourage a child to communicate in a private setting (eg text messages or social media) where open or group communication is possible through other means. • Be alone with a child. • Use a computer, mobile phone, camera or other device to exploit or harass a child. • Show favour, or offer gifts or excess attention to a particular child