

Strategies for Creating a Child Safe Environment

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Clubs should put in place strategies to develop child safe environments and minimise opportunities for child abuse including preventing offenders from gaining access to your club.

General strategies to achieve child safe environments include:

- Understanding the different types of child abuse;
- Identifying potential risks and dangers to children (e.g., going away on tours) and managing those risks;
- Make sure all members are aware of the Code of Conduct for dealing with Children and Young People;
- Support members who challenge inappropriate behavior; and
- Educate members on the guidelines and processes on how to respond to child protection issues;

By implementing the strategies listed below, clubs and associations can provide a safer and more enjoyable environment for children.

- Appoint a child protection (member protection) representative. This person should be the first point of contact if a child, parent or other member of the club or association becomes concerned about an incident.
- Have a child protection (member protection) representative appropriately trained and their details and role advertised within the club.
- Promote and adhere the SLSA Member Protection Policy (MPP) including the Code of Conduct for dealing with children and young people and ensure the policy is easily accessible (e.g., available via club website).
- Adopt a thorough recruitment and selection practice for paid positions. These practices should include job descriptions, interviews, checking reference and where appropriate, conducting police checks. (Refer to the Club Employee Screening and Checklist Guide)
- Ensure all required members meet all relevant state child protection legislative requirements and verifications have been undertaken where applicable. The information and process for applying for a working with children check or your states equivalent should be available and accessible to members. (www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/child-protection/child-protection-laws-explained/screening-and-working-with-children-checks)
- Ensure all members are educated and are aware of how and where to report a suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse.
- Ensure there is no harassment and victimization of any members who challenge inappropriate behavior of others.
- Ensure there is no harassment and victimization of the child or the person who made the allegation on behalf of the child.
- Where applicable use accredited coaches and officials and check their accreditation is current.
- Provide information to coaches and others working with children about how to recognise child abuse and give them directions on what to do if abuse is reported or suspected.
- Encourage all members to undertake the Safeguarding Children and Young People awareness module, to increase awareness of child abuse and ways to make your club a child safe organisation.

Source: *Play by the Rules/Strategies for Clubs and Associations – Child Protection*