

NEWHAVEN YACHT SQUADRON

Child Safe Policy

(From January 1, 2017, the Child Safe Standards is a legal requirement that applies to all sporting organisations that operate and provide sporting services to children within Victoria)

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Approved By: Rear Commodore, Alen Garrett
Endorsed By: NYS Committee on July 14, 2017
Date for Review: July, 2019

Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers of the **Newhaven Yacht Squadron (the Squadron)** to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices the Squadron has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

Commitment to Child Safety

All children who are a part of the Squadron have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and the Squadron has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The Squadron aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun, and to ensure to the best of its ability that the Squadron's relevant activities are carried out in the best interests of the children.

Application of this Policy

This policy was developed by the Squadron and in collaboration with Bass Coast & South Gippsland Specialist Schools.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:
Members Administrators Coaches Officials Participants Parents Spectators

All of the people to whom this policy applies have a role and responsibility in relation to child protection. They must all:

- understand the indicators and risks of child abuse;
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children; and
- understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.

Child Abuse

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child, and these are circumstances that the Squadron is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

The Squadron encourages children to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We do not want children to continue an activity when they feel unsafe.

Valuing Diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation. We deliver an ongoing Sailability program

Recruiting staff and volunteers

The Squadron takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. We:

- require police checks and Working with Children Checks for relevant positions
- only employ volunteers with appropriate skills relevant to the activity
- provide appropriate training.

Supporting staff and volunteers

The Squadron seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers.

- The presentation and discussion of this Policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct will form part of the pre-season induction/information session for volunteers for our Sailability program
- A Child Safety Officer has been nominated to support and inform staff, members, and volunteers about matters relating to child safety, and to whom to report any suspected or identified breaches of the code
- The Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct will be posted on the squadron website

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The Squadron has appointed _____ as Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility of responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children. That person can be contacted by *[insert relevant email address or phone number for contact person]*.

Risk Management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- travel; or
- physical contact when coaching or managing children.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed every two (2) years and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers involved in the Squadron.

APPENDIX A

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

From 1 January 2017, the Child Safe Standards (the Standards) will apply to all sporting organisations that operate and provide sporting services to children within Victoria. They are a legal requirement that will need to be compliant with as of 1 January 2017. It's about creating a culture and environment within sport that is supportive and protective of children.

What Are The Standards?

1. Strategies to embed an organisational **culture of child safety**, including through effective leadership arrangements
2. A **child safe policy** or statement of commitment to child safety
3. A **code of conduct** that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
4. Screening, supervision, training and other **human resources practices** that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
5. Processes for **responding to and reporting** suspected child abuse
6. Strategies to **identify and reduce or remove risks** of child abuse
7. Strategies to promote the **participation and empowerment of children**

Each of the Standards must be understood and applied in the context of:

- The cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- The cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background
- The safety of children with a disability

Standard 1:

***Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety,
including through effective leadership arrangements***

This Means:

Leading from the top down and embedding a culture that makes child safety everyone's business by:

- Protecting the interests of the child, not the organisation
- Making child safety a top priority in the organisation
- Taking a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and to racial, religious or cultural discrimination
- Establishing values, behavioural expectations and recruitment practices that are consistent with a child centred, child safe culture

Examples:

- Ensure your strategic direction, vision and mission includes child safety as a key goal
- Have child safety representatives or champions who are appropriately trained and supported
- Include child safety as a regular communication item with your staff
- Undertake awareness training for all board, staff and volunteers. This may be face to face or via an online service such as the [Play By The Rules – Child Protection online module](#)

Standard 2:

A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

This Means:

Creating a foundation for a child safe environment by:

- Documenting how to meet your duty of care responsibilities to children
- Affirming a commitment to child safety and the best interests of children
- Making a commitment to child safety clear to people in your organisation, children and families and the community

Examples:

- Develop a new (or review your existing) child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
- Communicate the statement or policy publicly and widely. This may include website, newsletters and social media.
- Ensure board members, staff and volunteers are aware of the organisation's child safe policy and its key provisions. For example include child safety material in staff induction information and welcome packs.

Standard 3:

A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

This Means:

Setting clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children by:

- Providing written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
- Detailing acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in situations as they relate to your organisation. For example physical contact, personal care, online communication, staff to child ratios and camps.
- Educating staff, volunteers, parents and children about the required standards of behaviour and what will happen if a person does not comply

Examples:

- Develop a new (or review your existing) code of conduct to ensure it outlines clear standards for working with children in a range of situations and environments
- Build ownership and commitment to the code of conduct by providing opportunities for staff, volunteers, families and children to contribute to the code of conduct.
- Ensure all personnel (paid and volunteer) are aware of the code of conduct and ask them to sign it

Standard 4:

Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

This Means:

Effectively screening and training people in your organisation to reduce the risk of child abuse by:

- Engaging only the most suitable people (whether in a paid or voluntary capacity) to work with children
- Having robust pre-employment screening processes and background checking
- Creating clear job descriptions and duty statements
- Understanding the nature and signs of child abuse
- Providing high quality supervision and professional development.

Examples:

- Build child safe selection criteria into job descriptions, recruitment advertisements and interviews
- Embed screening methods such as Police, Referee and Working with Children Checks into your recruitment strategy. You cannot rely on one method solely as they all address different criteria.
- Ensure probation periods are established for new staff and volunteers
- Provide ongoing information and training for staff and volunteers as part of your organisation's approach to professional development

Standard 5:

Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

This Means:

Putting in place clear procedures for responding to and reporting child safety concerns or child abuse

- Procedures for raising concerns and complaints are clear and can be understood by children
- Children know who to talk to if they are worried, and are encouraged to report unsafe behaviours

- People within the organisation are aware of their duty of care and legal responsibilities, and know what to do to respond appropriately
- Concerns and complaints are acted upon appropriately.

Examples:

- Develop (or review) a process for reporting suspected child abuse that is clear and robust. Sports may find some of this information in current Member Protection Policies & Procedures.
- Ensure children and families are aware of the process (communicate it widely) and know how to utilise it
- Provide training for staff to identify and respond to suspected child abuse

NOTE: Victorian law requires mandatory reporting by any adult who has a reasonable belief that an instance of child sexual abuse has occurred.

Information on how to report child abuse can be found here:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection>

Standard 6:

Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

This Means:

Identifying potential for harm and proactively planning to prevent, reduce or remove the risk of child abuse

- Having a clear understanding of the vulnerabilities of the organisation (and the specific activities provided) and the potential risks this may pose to children
- Being proactive to reduce the likelihood of risks emerging or escalating
- Adopting a risk management approach and developing a risk management plan.

Examples:

- Undertake a risk assessment to identify potential risks your organisation may face and how to address them
- Ensure staff and volunteers are trained to identify and respond to suspected child abuse
- Regularly schedule discussion about child safety and risk minimisation in staff and team meetings

Standard 7:

Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

This Means:

Supporting children and young people to understand their rights, contribute to child safety planning and to raise concerns by:

- Valuing and respecting children's opinions
- Encouraging children's participation in decision making
- Establishing an environment of trust and inclusion that enables children to ask questions and speak up if they are worried or feeling unsafe.

Examples:

- Provide children with child-appropriate and accessible information about what child abuse, their rights and how they can raise any concerns
- Provide opportunities for children to provide suggestions and thoughts on what child safety means to them through a range of methods. This could include email, suggestion boxes, feedback sessions
- Ensure staff and volunteers receive training on how to engage and empower children on this issue

Additional Resources: Further examples of strategies can be found in the following resources:

[An overview of the Victorian child safe standards](#)

(State Government of Victoria, Department of Health & Human Service)

[A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0](#)

(Commission for Children and Young People)

Further Information

P +61 3 9698 8100 E admin@vicsport.com.au W www.vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards

APPENDIX B

COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

General tips for communicating with people with a disability

- Speak to a person with a disability as you would speak to anyone else. Speak in an age-appropriate tone. Treat adults as adults
- If a person with a disability is accompanied by another person such as a carer, address your questions directly to the person with a disability
- Put the person first, not their disability. For example, use the term “a person with a disability” rather than “a disabled person”
- Try to avoid negative phrases such as “suffers from” and “crippled”. Use the phrase “people who use a wheelchair” rather than “wheelchair bound”.

Communicating with people with physical disabilities

- Remember that a person’s personal space can include their wheelchair and crutches. Do not touch or push a person’s wheelchair or move their crutches or walking stick without their permission
- When speaking with a person who uses a wheelchair, try to find something to sit on in order to be at eye level with them.

Communicating with people with a vision impairment

- When you meet people who have a vision impairment, always address them by name and introduce yourself by name
- Speak clearly and in a normal voice. There is no need to raise your voice
- Remember that people with a vision impairment cannot rely on the same visual cues as people who do not have a vision impairment. Make sure you verbalise any thoughts or feelings
- If a person is accompanied by a guide dog, do not pat it, feed it or otherwise distract it while it is in a harness. A dog in a harness is working
- When you enter or leave a room, say something that indicates your presence or that you are leaving. This ensures that the person who has a vision impairment will not be embarrassed by speaking to an empty space.

Communicating with people with a hearing impairment

- Gain the person’s attention before speaking. Try a gentle tap on the shoulder, a wave or some other visual signal to gain attention
- Face the person directly and maintain eye contact
- Make sure your mouth is visible. Remember not to cover your mouth with your hand or any other object as you talk
- Look directly at the person while speaking and speak evenly, not too fast or slow
- Don’t exaggerate your mouth movements, as this will make it more difficult to lip-read
- Use short sentences
- Keep your volume up and natural. Don’t shout.

Communicating with people with an intellectual disability

- Before talking, ensure you have the person’s attention. Try using their name or eye contact to make sure you have their attention
- Keep your questions simple and your answers easy to understand
- Remember that your body language is important, as people with an intellectual disability often rely on visual cues
- Be prepared to use visual information or to receive visual information from people with an intellectual disability
- Be specific and direct. Avoid talking using abstracts, acronyms, metaphors or puns.

APPENDIX C

TAKING IMAGES OR VIDEO OF CHILDREN AT SPORTING EVENTS

Most people taking photos or video of children at sporting events are doing so for acceptable reasons and are using appropriate methods, for example;

- a parent videoing their child at a sports presentation, or
- a parent photographing their child on the field during play, or
- a professional photographer taking photos for a Squadron.

The small size of many cameras and the introduction of mobile phone cameras make it easier to take photos and harder to monitor. Digital photo publication can now be printed at home and photos can be taken, altered, and transmitted quickly to a vast audience by posting on social media sites or 'on sending' the photo to other mobile phone users.

This greater ease of taking and modifying images has raised concerns about the potential risks of child abuse. These risks are posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the inappropriate use of photographs featured on sports web sites and in publications.

The following information and suggested strategies have been provided for sporting clubs and associations to consider when acquiring and displaying images of children and young people on web sites and in other publications. It is not intended to restrict people taking photos for legitimate reasons.

Please note that this information is not intended to be, nor should it be relied upon as a substitute for legal or other professional advice. Organisations and individuals should seek legal advice in relation to these issues in your state or territory.

The Law

In Australia, generally speaking, there is no law restricting photography of people (including children) in public spaces as long as the images are not:

- indecent (such as 'up skirt' or 'downblouse' photographs taken covertly in change rooms or toilets)
- being used for voyeurism or made for the purpose of observing and visually recording a person's genital or anal region
- protected by a court order (e.g. child custody or witness protection)
- defamatory
- being for commercial purposes (person's likeness is used to endorse or entice people to buy a product).

Photos of a child (including your own child) also contravene Criminal Codes and censorship laws if the child is photographed in a provocative or sexual manner.

Where a sporting event is held on a club's private property, privately owned land, a school or council owned facilities, the owner of private property or venue is able to restrict, ban or require permission of photography anywhere in their venue (e.g. some council owned facilities will not allow mobile phones or cameras in change rooms or toilets). Where a sporting event is held on private property not owned by the organisers, it is good practice to determine a mutually agreed photographing policy.

If a person is taking photographs inappropriately (e.g. breaching the restrictions or ban in place for that private property or venue), then venue management should request the person to stop. If the person refuses, the police or security may be called to escort them off the property. If anyone has reasonable concerns that a person (adult or child) is taking photographs that are indecent or in areas like toilets/changerooms should contact the police.

Strategies - acquiring Images

- Clearly outline and publicise what is considered appropriate behaviour in taking images and what is considered appropriate image content.
- Do not allow photographers (professional photographers, spectators, fans, coaches or members of the media) unsupervised access to children.
- Ensure the coach informs any athlete and parent(s) if the coach wants to video the athlete as a tool to analyse and improve performance.

- Obtain the consent of parent /guardian and their agreement to be present before approving photo/video sessions outside the event venue or at the home of a child. Where possible, have the photo taken at the event venue.
- Provide details of who to contact within the club or organisation if concerns or complaints of inappropriate behaviour in taking images or content are raised. Ensure that the contact person understands the application of relevant legislation and policies (or where to find it).
- Provide members of the media and professional photographers with an identification pass to be worn for the duration of major/large events.

Strategies - displaying images

- Consider using models or illustrations for promotional / advertising purposes.
- Obtain permission from the child's parent/guardian prior to taking the images of a child or young person. Ensure that all concerned are aware of the way in which the image is to be used and how long the image will be displayed.
- If an image is used avoid naming the child. If this is not possible avoid using both a first name and surname.
- Avoid displaying personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers if images are being posted on websites or distributed in publications.
- Do not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc. as this information has the potential to be used as grooming tools by offenders or other persons.
- Only use appropriate images of the child, relevant to the sport or activity, and ensure that the athlete/child is suitably clothed. Images of athletes participating in sports or activities that involve minimal clothing (e.g. swimming and gymnastics) or unusual body positions/poses could potentially be misused.
- Reduce the ability for direct copying of pictures from a website to another source (i.e. disable the 'right mouse click' function).
- Clearly outline in a written contract to photographers who are contracted or paid to take photos, who will retain the images taken, include arrangements made for negatives, digital file and proofs and outline any restrictions for use and sale.
- Provide details of who to contact and what to do if concerns or complaints of inappropriate image use are raised.