



Tullamarine Football Club

Incorporated 1984

Affiliated in the Essendon District Football League

"A" Grade premiers: 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979 (league record)

"b" grade premiers: 1981, 1993, 2003

Child Safety Policy

Purpose

To demonstrate the strong commitment of the Committee, volunteers and members of Tullamarine Football Club (TFC) to child safety and to provide an outline of the guidelines and practices the TFC has developed to minimise the risk of harm or abuse occurring.

This Policy aims to protect children and young people against the risk of abuse and harm and eliminate, so far as is practicable, the opportunity for these situations to occur. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, club policies, procedures and professional standards, codes of conduct or ethics as applied by volunteers.

Mission Statement

The Tullamarine Football Club is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our committee and community recognise the importance of, and a responsibility to ensuring our club is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

Application

All volunteers and any other member of the TFC community involved in child-related activities or roles are required to comply with this policy by observing and adhering to the guidelines and procedures set out by the TFC and, more broadly, National Child Safe Legislation.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined as *an act or omission by a parent, caregiver, other adult or child that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and development.*

Types of child abuse include:

(as documented by AFL Vic – Child Safe Standards in Football)

- **Physical abuse** is intentionally causing or threatening to cause physical injury to a child, or inadvertently causing injury as a consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment.

- **Examples:** Physical assault, hitting, shaking, restraining, etc.

- **Signs:** Bruises, cuts, burns, fractures, covering up seemingly unnecessarily

▪ **Emotional abuse** occurs when a person engages in inappropriate behaviours such as rejecting, ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening or verbally abusing a child, or allowing others to do so.

o **Examples:** Yelling, ignoring, teasing, verbal abuse, bullying, etc.

o **Signs:** Delayed physical/emotional development, withdrawn, low self-esteem, shy, agitated, anxious, self-harming

▪ **Sexual abuse** is when any person uses their authority over a child to involve the child in any sexual activity.

o **Examples:** Fondling genitals, masturbation, penetration, voyeurism and exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, sexting, etc.

o **Signs:** Bruising, withdrawal, anxious, over-sexualisation, secretive, low self-esteem, weight loss or gain, self-harming

▪ **Neglect means** failing to meet a child's basic needs such as providing adequate food, drink, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene or medical attention.

o **Examples:** Withholding any basic need, lack of emotional support, no security or stability, withholding education, etc.

o **Signs:** Hunger, lack of clothing, homeless, poor hygiene, stealing, skinny, tired, regularly ill, attention seeking

▪ **Family violence** occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home and can be very harmful. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.

▪ **Grooming** is the behaviours used to prepare a child with the intention of sexually abusing them. This includes building a trusting relationship with a child and their parents/carers, and 'special relationships' and spending time alone with children or outside the work role. It graduates from attention-giving and non-sexual touching to increasingly intimate and intrusive behaviours.

Reporting

Tullamarine Football Club has a nominated Child Safety Officer (CSO). The role of the CSO is to give players and their families a known point of contact for matters regarding child safety. For all incidents or concerns regarding child safety, CSO's are the best club contact. They are equipped with the knowledge and resources to either help with issues or support the club or individual in taking the matter further. (For further reporting resources, please see Appendix A). All reports/complaints will be treated seriously and handled with maximum confidentiality and discretion.

Recruitment

The Tullamarine Football Club recognises the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur – therefore, we will maintain a strict recruitment process for all staff and volunteers who will likely have regular contact with children and young people at the club. All adults who are involved with and have regular contact with children under the age of 18 must hold a current Working with Children Check.

Roles & Responsibilities of Personnel Protecting Children

While the CSO may be the best point of contact for child safety issues, it is also the responsibility of all club and community members to be diligent in relation to child protection. All players, coaches, officials, administrators, parents, spectators and members will have access to this policy and other information to educate them about Child Safety and how to report any concerns they may have.

Child Safe & Child Friendly Guidelines

The following guidelines are simple ways that all persons can uphold their child protection responsibilities and promote positive, safe and friendly behaviour towards children and young people.

- Positive guidance - acting appropriately with children.
 - Diversity & Inclusion – Do not tolerate any discriminatory practices; promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal or culturally/linguistically diverse children and their families; welcome children with a disability and act to promote their participation.
 - Adhering to role boundaries – should not act outside of the confines of the duties of your role.
 - Use of language and tone of voice – no swearing or defamatory language, clear direction and encouragement, not being harmful in what you say.
 - Supervision – avoid being alone one on one with a child out of the view of others where possible.
 - Use of electronic communications – where possible email, text messages and social media communications to include parent/guardian or within an open group message.
 - Photographs of children and young people – within expectations of AFL privacy policy e.g. photos taken in context of the program, dressed appropriately, etc.
 - Physical contact with children and young people – done when reasonable and in an appropriate manner.
 - Sexual misconduct – under no circumstances are sexual acts to occur with or in the presence of children.
 - Change room arrangements – important to supervise children while also balancing a child's right to privacy.
 - Transporting children – prior authorisation from management and child's parents.
 - Gift giving – prior authorisation from management and child's parents.
 - Overnight stays – work purposes only within a part of a formal program with authorisations from parents.
- Gender of supervisors considered and balanced with children participating.
- Alcohol & Drugs – while on duty must not use, possess, supply or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including being incapacitated from legal medications.

Review

This policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis and changes will be made accordingly.

Appendix A – Reporting Procedure

Child in Immediate Danger

1- CALL 000

If someone is in immediate danger, call 000.

Serious/Criminal Breach

1- Breach Communicated to CSO

If there are **reasonable grounds** to believe a child needs protection from abuse, Police/Higher Authority, Club President and EDFL are notified.

2 - CSO Reports to Higher Authority

Now an external issue. CSO, Clubs and EDFL to assist where required.

Non-Criminal Concern or Breach

1 -Breach Communicated to CSO

All reports are taken seriously.

2 - CSO Gathers Details

Not an investigation. CSO's should gather basic information only (enough to determine whether to refer for investigation or to pursue a resolution

3 - Conclusion

Issue is either resolved or referred to a Higher Authority.