



# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Everyone who plays AFL has the right to Be Safe, Feel Safe, Play Safe.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The AFL acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge we play our great game on this land and respect the cultures of all First Peoples, their contribution to our nation and contribution to the game of Australian Rules Football.

We would also like to acknowledge any victim survivors of child abuse who may be here today. Know that we hear you and your voice matters.

# SESSION OVERVIEW

1. What is safeguarding?
2. What is abuse?
3. What are our obligations?
4. What do we need to do?



# WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding children and young people in footy

# WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

**Safeguarding** means making sure children and young people who participate in AFL/W activities, programs, services or use its facilities feel:

- Welcome
- Safe
- Comfortable
- Included

# WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

**Safeguarding** means making sure children and young people are safe from:

- **Accidents and injuries** during training and play
- **Bullying and harassment** from other young people or adults in footy
- **Physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect**

# WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

**Safeguarding** children and young people in sport means having things in place to:

- **Reduce** the likelihood of abuse of a child or young person
- **Increase** the likelihood of knowing if a child or young person has experienced harm or abuse
- **Increase** organisational ability to respond appropriately if a child or young person has experienced abuse



# WHAT IS ABUSE?

Understanding what abuse may look like in footy



# ABUSE IN FOOTY— WHEN, WHERE AND HOW

Abuse in footy is any form of abuse that occurs:

- **During sport** – training, matches and club events and activities
- **Travelling** – in a car or bus, camps, carnivals or overnight football trips
- **Between two or more people involved in sport** – participants, coaches, volunteers and parents
- From spectators, family and entourages from the **sidelines and stands**
- Additionally, a child or young person may **experience abuse elsewhere**, but **disclose it to someone they trust at their club**

# TYPES OF ABUSE



## TYPES OF ABUSE

### ① PHYSICAL ABUSE

Any action that uses physical force that hurts a child or young person.

This includes hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning, suffocating.

### ② SEXUAL ABUSE

Any behaviour that is sexual, or that makes a child or young person feel uncomfortable, threatened or scared, or is illegal.

This includes physical touch and talking about sexual and private things in person or online or showing someone videos or photos that are sexual or private or asking someone to send private or sexual videos to someone else.

### ③ NEGLECT

When an adult doesn't provide a child or young person with basic needs such as food, water, shelter, appropriate clothing, supervision, access to education and health services.

### ④ GROOMING

This includes when an adult is acting in a way that singles out a child or young person, getting to have one on one time with them, looking for ways to be alone with them away from other adults. It can feel like it is normal and might not even make the child or young person uncomfortable, but it doesn't happen to others.

### ⑤ EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The use of words or acts that can make a child or young person feel bad, sad, embarrassed, left out, worried, confused, shamed, anxious or threatened.

### ⑥ BULLYING

Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying may include:

- verbal (name calling, put downs, threats)
- physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
- social (ignoring, excluding, alienating)
- psychological (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).



# EXAMPLES



A coach who sends personal WhatsApp messages late at night to the 13-yr old players in their team

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The manager who continually singles a player out in front of the rest of the team, commenting on how they *'aren't good enough to be in the team and should be playing down a grade'*

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A male player sneaking into a female player's room at a footy camp without consent

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A parent who is helping on an interstate trip who thinks it's cool to show porn to the under 13s team in the hotel after the match

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A committee member charged with possessing child abuse material

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A child who is touched unnecessarily by a parent helper when being taught how to perform a skill



# 2MIN CHECK-IN

- Can you think of any situations you have seen, or heard about, that might raise concerns?
- Do you think your club, or people within your club may have let some of this stuff slide in the past?
- What about now?

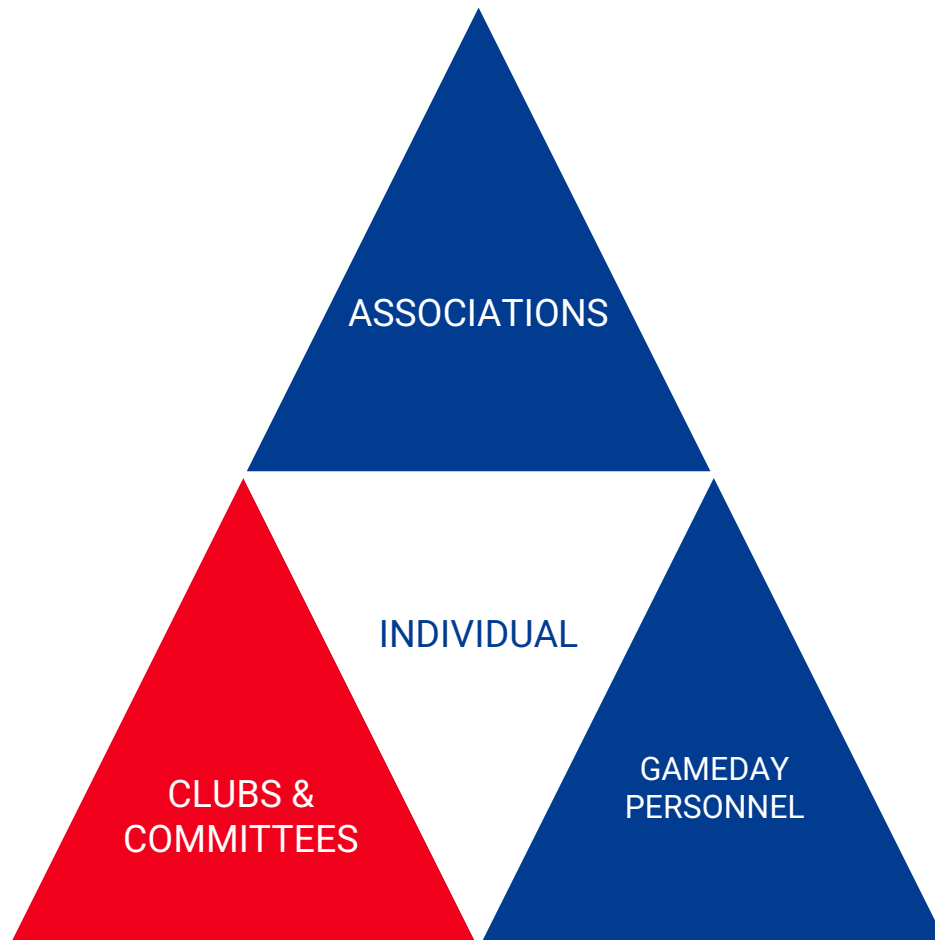


# WHAT ARE OUR OBLIGATIONS?

The legislation and what it means for clubs.



# WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY



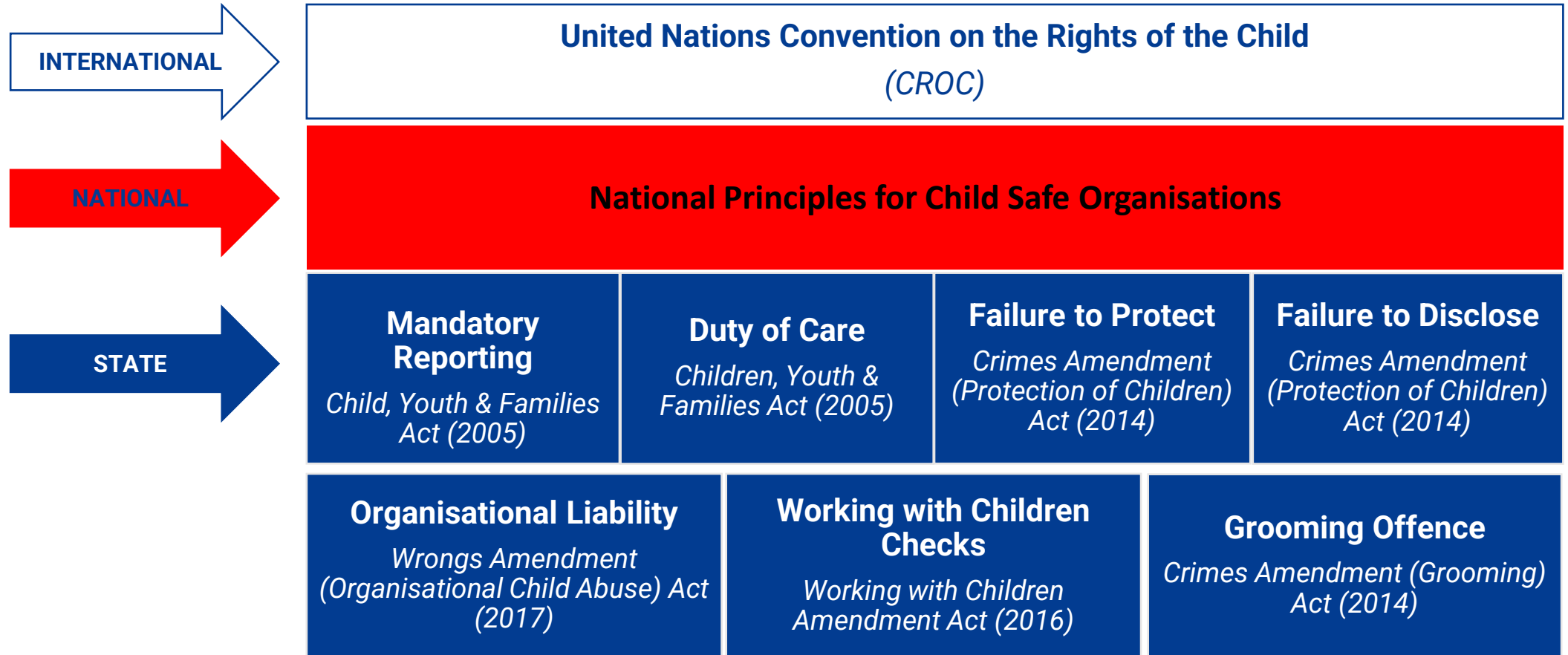
**ASSOCIATIONS** at all levels are responsible for the way in which they lead their commitment to the safety of children and young people through policy, practice, education and culture.

**CLUBS** and committees are responsible for the expectations they set, the culture they create, the environment in which they operate, the information and education they provide to ensure this, and the way in which they respond to concerns raised with them.

**GAMEDAY PERSONNEL** are responsible not only for their own behaviours, attitudes and actions, but also for the boundaries and expectations they set for children and young people, the culture they create and the way in which they respond to concerns raised with them.

**INDIVIDUAL** adults in footy, regardless of their role, are responsible for the impact their own behaviours, attitudes and actions have on the safety of children and young people.

# LEGISLATION



# SUMMARY OF THE LAWS

In Victoria:

- All volunteers and paid staff must have a **Working with Children Check or equivalent**
- All adults must **report all concerns of abuse** of a child or young person
- **Grooming online** is an offence
- **Grooming in person** is an offence
- Organisations can be held **legally responsible for abuse** that occurs





# VIC CHILD SAFE STANDARDS



# VIC CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

## CURRENT

1. Governance & leadership
2. Clear commitment to child safety
3. Code of conduct
4. Human resource practices
5. Responding & reporting
6. Risk management & mitigation
7. Empowering children

Promoting cultural safety of Aboriginal children

Promoting the cultural safety of culturally &/or linguistically diverse children

Promoting the safety of children with a disability

## NEW

1. ● Culturally safe for aboriginal children & young people
2. Committed leadership, governance & culture
3. Children & young people are safe, informed & empowered
4. Families and community involvement
5. ● ● ● Equity upheld & diversity respected
6. Robust recruitment & screening
7. Child focused complaints management
8. Ongoing education & training
9. Safe physical & online environments
10. Regular improvement
11. Child safety & wellbeing policies & procedures

# SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES

- ✔ Supporting greater **national consistency** reflecting the 'National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation'
- ✔ Greater involvement of **families and communities** in organisations' efforts to keep children and young people safe
- ✔ A greater focus on the safety for **Aboriginal children and young people**
- ✔ Managing the risk of **child abuse** in **online environments**
- ✔ **Greater clarity** on the **governance, systems and processes** to keep children and young people safe.



# HOW DO THEY APPLY TO:

## Clubs/Committees

- Overall governance, risk and culture
- The club policies and procedures
- The safeguarding information that is provided to everyone including information about making complaints
- The continuous improvements required to stay on top of these obligations
- Recruitment, education and supervision of volunteers
- Engagement and participation of children, young people and their families in the club
- The physical and online environments including facilities, changerooms, clubrooms and grounds
- The cultural safety of Aboriginal children and their families, and the way in which those from diverse communities are included and made to feel welcome

**Standards 1-11**

## Game Day Personnel

- Ensuring only safe and appropriate people are recruited into roles within the club
- Offering access to education to make sure they know what is expected of them and what the rules are
- Having clear complaints processes and empowering them to speak up and call out poor behaviour and abuse

**Standards 6,7,8 & 11**

## Children, Young People & their Families

- Creating a club culture where everyone feels included and welcome
- Offering access to education to make sure they know what is expected of them and what the rules are
- Having clear complaints processes and empowering them to speak up and call out poor behaviour and abuse

**Standards 1,3,4,5,7,8 & 11**

# 2MIN CHECK-IN

Take a moment to write a list of examples of actions you KNOW your club HAS completed or implemented that are moving you closer to compliance with the new standards.





# WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

Simple steps to move clubs closer to compliance.



# THE END GOAL

- ✔ A Committee that understands safeguarding, the risks and obligations
- ✔ A Code of Conduct that explicitly outlines expected conduct and behaviours
- ✔ Coaches, officials and others who deliver/support community football who been deemed appropriate to work with children and young people
- ✔ Policies and guidelines that are accessible and easy to understand
- ✔ Ongoing training and education for all adults involved with children and young people
- ✔ Mechanisms to make complaints and report concerns, especially for children and young people
- ✔ Processes for responding to complaints, concerns and disclosures
- ✔ Education for members to ensure they understand these processes and understand their responsibilities regarding safeguarding

# NOW, NEXT, AGAIN MODEL

**NOW**

- Things you can, and should, do NOW

**NEXT**

- Items that are still important, but can be addressed NEXT

**AGAIN**

- Things that need to be done AGAIN, or continuously, to maintain compliance.



# COMMITTEE – 6 POINTS

**NOW**

1. Put **SAFEGUARDING** on the committee agenda as a standing item
2. Ask all committee members and other relevant roles to **watch this recording**
3. Choose your **Safeguarding Lead**
4. Ask them to complete the **Safe Footy Check in Tool**
5. Promote the **AFL Safeguarding Resources**
6. Continue to attend these sessions for more detailed information!



# 1. PUT SAFEGUARDING ON THE COMMITTEE AGENDA AS A STANDING ITEM

**Now:** Email the club secretary and president and ask for Safeguarding to be a standing item on the agenda

**Next:** Allocate 10min to discuss:

- what you have learnt from this session
- what you need to committee to do
- where they can find more information

**Again:** Revisit this agenda item for each meeting. Don't worry, there will always be something to talk about! The Implementation Guide you will have access to will give you topics to cover and tasks to complete at each meeting.

## 2. ASK ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND OTHER RELEVANT ROLES TO WATCH THIS RECORDING

**Now:** Send the link to this recording to the committee and explain why it is important for them to watch it when you get to it on the agenda.

**Next:** Invite them to watch the following sessions too, especially the one that unpacks committee responsibilities in more detail!

**Again:** Offer it again in a few months time, there is no harm in a refresher!

# 3. CHOOSE YOUR SAFEGUARDING LEAD

**Now:** If you already have a Child Safe Officer, that is your Safeguarding Lead! Buy them a coffee and fill them in on what you have learnt tonight and what is coming up.

If you don't, reach out to someone within the club who has a background in teaching, social work, psychology, policing or youth work and ask them to come on board at least for the short term (and hopefully the long term!) to help progress the club.

They don't hold all the responsibility, they are just the driver!

**Next:** Invite them to watch the following sessions and to access and familiarise themselves with all the available resources.

**Again:** Invite them to prepare a report to the committee for each meeting with an update on the Implementation Guide and even better, ask them to come in person so they can discuss the club's progress!

# 4. ASK THEM TO COMPLETE THE *SAFE FOOTY CHECK IN TOOL*

**Now:** Introduce the Safeguarding Lead to the Safe Footy Check In Tool and ask them to work through it to gauge the club's current position. They may need help from the president if they are not familiar with the club's governance.

**Next:** Ask them to prepare a summary of the outcome for the next committee meeting.

**Again:** Ask them to repeat the Safe Footy Check in Tool in a few months time!

# 5. PROMOTE THE AFL SAFEGUARDING RESOURCES

**Now:** Check out the link here to see what is available, there is something for everyone!

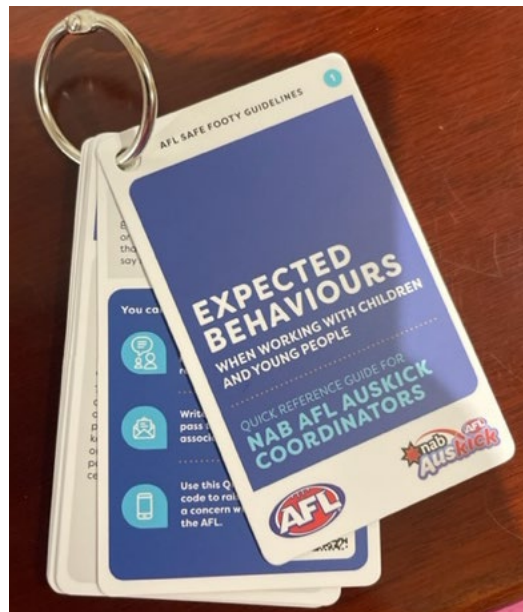
<https://www.afl.com.au/clubhelp/safeguarding-children>

**Next:** Work with the Safeguarding Lead and your club social media guru to promote these to the appropriate audiences. Get creative!

- Put posters up
- Share links and screenshots on socials
- Upload links to website
- Print them off and hand them out in welcome packs.

**Again:** Keep it going! These should be shared and promoted on a rotation, not just once! Pop in to some junior training sessions and ask the children and young people if they have seen them?

# EXAMPLES OF RESOURCES



AFL SAFE FOOTY GUIDELINES | BE SAFE • FEEL SAFE • PLAY SAFE

## MY RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES AS A YOUNG PERSON INVOLVED IN FOOTY

**WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS IN FOOTY?**  
As a young person, you have rights, lots of them. They are called the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, check them out!

Having rights makes sure the child and protected doing the playing footy!

We want all kids who participate to be safe, feel safe, play safe. Her rights that relate to footy:

**The right to:**

- be treated fairly, no matter background, gender or sex or disability
- be safe from harm or abuse from an adult in the footy community
- have a say about things that affect you, and be taken seriously
- have privacy when you are showering at events or trips
- choose if you want to have your photo taken or have it shared on the internet
- have your personal information protected and not shared without you and your family knowing.

**DEFINITIONS**  
A Child: someone involved in footy who is 17 years or younger – usually a player but...

**WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES IN FOOTY?**  
With rights, come responsibilities, but you have probably heard that before. Like school, or work, you are responsible for your own behaviour and how it impacts others around you. When it comes to behaviour in footy, remember to:

- PLAY FAIR** Show respect to everyone around you – peers, coaches and umpires.
- PLAY SAFE** Prioritise safety, yours, and the people around you, always.
- PLAY KIND** Be inclusive, patient, and welcoming, especially to newcomers.

Pretty straight forward huh?

**WHAT ELSE SHOULD I DO?**  
If we all just followed the rules, everyone would be ok, right? Of course! But life isn't that simple. Young people often have a lot going on for them, and it's easy to forget the rules some times. Here are three easy steps to keep you in check.

- CHECK YOURSELF**  
Check your own behaviour is in line with your responsibilities and that you are not the reason why someone else may be feeling unsafe, uncomfortable, unwelcome, or excluded.
- CHECK YOUR MATE**  
Check in on your teammates and your other footy friends, make sure they are doing ok and offer to help where you can.
- SAY SOMETHING**  
If you have concerns about your safety or the safety of another child or young person, or have seen or heard something that just doesn't feel right, it is important you say something.

Speak to a parent, carer, family member or trusted adult like a coach, team manager, umpire, official or club representative.

Write down your concerns and pass them onto your club or association via email or letter.

Use the QR code to raise a concern with the AFL.

For any safeguarding queries email [childsafety@afl.com.au](mailto:childsafety@afl.com.au) or contact Kids helpline on 1800 55 1800 (it's free) or [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

As always if anyone is in immediate danger contact the police on 000

Remember, we want all children and young people in footy to be safe, feel safe, play safe.

**IMPORTANT** - If your behaviour is impacting on another person's safety and wellbeing, and it has been discussed with you and it continues, or if it is really serious, there may be consequences. This can include warnings from a coach right down to notifying the police.

YOUNG PEOPLE | MY RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES AS A YOUNG PERSON INVOLVED IN FOOTY

AFL SAFE FOOTY GUIDELINES | BE SAFE • FEEL SAFE • PLAY SAFE



## EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS OF COACHES & VOLUNTEERS

**WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS OF ADULTS IN FOOTBALL?**

Coaches and volunteers across AFL clubs are required to follow safeguarding and codes and should make them relevant to their roles.

**Any behaviour from a coach or other adult should be addressed by the AFL, a club or even the police.**

This information is not just for you, it should be shared with all adults who are involved in football. If you think you should behave differently, you should.

**DEFINITIONS**

**OK**  
**Contact**  
Physical touch that is normal for football and happens in front of other people and WITH the child or young person's consent.  
This can include tackling, demonstrating skills and techniques, preventing injury, or keeping them safe, or high fives or a pat on the back to celebrate a win.

**NOT OK**  
**Contact**  
Any touch a child or young person does not consent to, or that makes them feel uncomfortable.  
Any touch that seems sexual, involves a child or young person's private parts, or embarrasses them.  
Any touch that happens in a private place like the changerooms or a car.

**Communication**  
Guidance that is positive, helpful, and encourages a child or young person's football skills and development as a person.  
Language that is calm and kind and is easily understood.  
Online communication that includes a child or young person and is used with the whole team.

**Boundaries**  
When someone has safe, or good boundaries, it means they:  

- have made sure children and young people understand their role
- act professionally – friendly but not too friendly
- follow the rules with things like sharing about a child or young person, or of them with their permission and the carer's permission, and when it is a child or young person that they are responsible for

**Supervision**  
Coaches who are responsible for supervising children and young people in football should:  

- always know where the children or young people are at all times
- give them privacy to use the bathroom, but still make sure that they are safe
- wait with them until they have been offered a lift if they have their licence insured, a parent or carer has provided consent and another person from the club is present

**ALL ADULTS INVOLVED IN FOOTBALL SHOULD BE TRAINED IN CHILD SAFETY**

YOUNG PEOPLE | EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS OF ADULTS INVOLVED IN FOOTBALL

AFL SAFE FOOTY GUIDELINES | BE SAFE • FEEL SAFE • PLAY SAFE



### OK

### NOT OK

#### Environment

#### Environment

#### Boundaries

#### Boundaries

#### Supervision

#### Supervision

AFL SAFE FOOTY GUIDELINES | BE SAFE • FEEL SAFE • PLAY SAFE



### OK

### NOT OK

#### Environment

#### Environment

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#### Supervision

### WHAT TO DO NEXT

You can:

#### SAY SOMETHING



Speak directly with someone you trust in football like a coach, team manager, umpire, official or club representative.

Even if you have not spoken directly with a child or young person but you have a **SUSPICION** that something is not right, it is important you say something.



Write down your concerns and pass them onto your club or association via email or a letter.

Use this QR code to raise a concern with the AFL.



For any safeguarding queries email [childsafety@afl.com.au](mailto:childsafety@afl.com.au)

As always if anyone is in immediate danger contact the police on 000

We want all children and young people in football to be safe, feel safe, play safe.



# 6. CONTINUE TO ATTEND THESE SESSIONS!

## Q & A SESSION - April 5<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm

This session is for Victorian Clubs to support and assist you in implementing the 2022 Victorian Child Safe standards.

Send in any questions you or your committee have and we will help work through any issues or hurdles you may be facing.

## MAY FOCUS SESSIONS

In these sessions we will focus on a specific cohort within your club, & consider the actions your club can be taking to ensure the Child Safe Standards are fully implemented.

**May 3, 7:30 PM** - Club Education

**May 17, 7:30 PM** - Game Day Personnel Education

**May 31, 7:30 PM** - Community Education





# ADDITIONAL SUPPORT RESOURCES

Support, education and resources for clubs

# AFL Safeguarding Children Portal

Suite of resources and useful links to help foster a safe and welcoming environment for children and young people in football



<https://www.afl.com.au/clubhelp/safeguarding-children>

## Safeguarding Children Resources



**Kids (5-12)**

We welcome all children from all backgrounds and abilities to play in our game



**Young People (13-18)**

We want all kids who participate in footy to be safe, feel safe, play safe



**Families and Community**

All adults, including parents and carers, are expected to play their part in keeping children and young people safe in football



**Coaches and Volunteers**

Coaches and volunteers across AFL programs and community clubs are required to follow safeguarding policies, procedures and codes



**Further Links**

List of sources that help promote and maintain the safeguarding of children



**Safeguarding Children**

Safeguarding resources to support participants and those who deliver and community football



## AFL Diversity & Inclusion Portal

Information, resources, tools and free online training to help prevent and deal with integrity issues and concerns in sport



<https://www.afl.com.au/clubhelp/diversity>

## Play By The Rules

Information, resources, tools and free online training to help prevent and deal with integrity issues and concerns in sport



<https://www.playbytherules.net.au>



# COMING NEXT

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# 2MIN CHECK IN

**WE LIKE DATA!**

Head to this link to fill out a 2 min survey to help us understand where you were at the beginning of this session and where you are now!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8HDTVXZ>

You will also have the option of adding questions and topics you would like us to cover in the Q and A coming up.

Alternatively you can email your topics and questions to:  
[info@dellamartaconsulting.com](mailto:info@dellamartaconsulting.com)



# THANK YOU & STAY SAFE

[info@dellamartaconsulting.com](mailto:info@dellamartaconsulting.com) OR [clubhelp@afl.com.au](mailto:clubhelp@afl.com.au)

