

Child Safety Policy



Introduction:

From 1 January 2017, the Victorian Child Safety Standards will apply to sporting organisations that operate and provide sporting services to children within Victoria

Our commitment to child safety

The Healesville Tennis Club is committed to child safety.

- We want children to be safe, happy and empowered, and encourage participation by all children
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- We have zero tolerance of any form of child abuse.
- Child protection is a shared responsibility. Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety and participation of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.
- Everyone covered by the Policy must comply with, and is bound to, the Club's Child Safety Code of Conduct at all times
- We have specific policies in place that support these commitments.
- This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000

Our committee and volunteers

This policy guides our committee and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All of our committee and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

Communication

The Club is pro-active in the area of prevention and will communicate the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct in the manner below.

PLAYERS	PARENTS, GUARDIANS,	COMMITTEE MEMBERS, COACHES, CONVENORS VOLUNTEERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conditions of becoming a member• Website• Club Newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conditions of becoming a member (Parents will receive a copy)• Website• Club Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website• Letters of appointment/ contracts/agreements• New Committee member Orientation

Recruitment

Our organisation understands that when recruiting committee members and other volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations in the area of child safety.

The Club will:

- a) Implement a recruitment process for coaches, assistant coaches, team managers, etc, for all the teams of our club.
- b) Ensure all coaches, volunteers, etc read and understand the Club's Code of Conduct and other policies.
- c) Conduct interviews, reference checks and online background searches to satisfy ourselves about people coming into positions of responsibility at our club.
- d) request that all people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, hold a Working with Children Check (WWCC), and to provide evidence of this check.
- e) Unless unavoidable, no adult will have access to an unaccompanied minor without prior permission from the minor's parents or guardian.

Fair procedures for personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

Legislative responsibilities

Our organisation takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.
- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.
- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

Allegations, concerns and complaints

Our organisation takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are committed to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident.
Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- observing suspicious behaviour.

POLICY REVIEW:

This policy will be reviewed every two years or following a significant incident, to ensure it remains relevant to the club and reflects both community expectations and guidelines for sporting bodies in relation to child safety.

Signed: B. Hargrave
President

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Secretary

Date: 19. June. 17.

Next policy review date: December 2019

Attachment 1: Code of Conduct

Attachment 2: Child Protection Procedure

Healesville Tennis Club Code of Conduct

All members, committee members, coaches and volunteers of Healesville Tennis Club are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Healesville Tennis Club are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to Healesville Tennis Club child safe policy at all times / upholding Healesville Tennis Club's statement of commitment to child safety at all time
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to Healesville Tennis Club's Child Safety Officer (The Junior Convenor) / executive committee member, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- reporting any child safety concerns to Healesville Tennis Club's Child Safety Officer (the Junior Convenor) / Executive Committee member
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS, MEMBERS, COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS MUST NOT:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometime, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate)

- have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters)
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to Healesville Tennis Club's Child Safety Officer (the Junior Convenor) / executive committee member.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Child Protection Procedure: Flowchart

Step 1 REPORTING:

Any person (aged 18 or over) that forms a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (aged 18 or older), must make a report to the police as soon as practicable.

Committee members, employee, volunteers, or of-age players of the Club should discuss these observations and concerns with the Club Child Safety Officer*, who can assist the person to make the report to the police as required.

Any person (of any age) that forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or neglect), **may** disclose that information to the police or the Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS"). The Club encourages all persons with concerns to raise this directly with the Club Child Safety Officer.

*The Child Safety Officer is the Junior Convenor, or other executive committee member, but will be referred to as the Club Child Safety Officer in the remainder of the document.



Step 2:

It may be that, following the previous step, a person decides to make a report to DHHS or the police with the support of the Club Child Safety Officer.

Where a report is made, the individual must also advise the Club Executive.

Making a report:

Ring:

- Victoria police on 000 for emergencies.
- If it is not an emergency, ring the Victoria Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team on (03) 8690 4056.
- DHHS on 1300 664 977 or 131278(AH). Ask for Child Protection.

Information for making a report:

- name, age and address of child;
- the reason for suspecting that the behaviour or injury is a result of abuse;
- an assessment of the immediate danger to the child;
- a description of the injury or behaviour observed;
- the current whereabouts of the child;
- any other information about the family; and
- any specific cultural details, e.g. English speaking, disability, etc.

Ask that the Club be informed of each step of the procedure.

Request that if an interview is to take place at the Club the visiting police officer is in plain

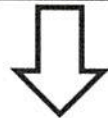
clothes and the time of the interview is specified so that appropriate arrangements for a meeting room can be organized.

If the complainant alleges that a crime has been committed by a committee member, employee, volunteer or contractor, that person will be stood aside immediately.

The Club Child Safety Officer should conduct (or appoint another person to conduct) an independent investigation into the allegation to the extent that it will not interfere with investigations by DHHS or the police, and will co-operate with the authorities as required.

Where an allegation has been made, the Club will make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the Club's response to it.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in this Procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.



Step 3:

If the child is agreeable to be interviewed by DHHS or the police, the Club Child Safety Officer should offer to be present at the interview to give support to the child.



Step 4:

Following a report, DHHS or the police may need to contact the Club about the notification. It would be a matter of courtesy to inform the Club Child Safety Officer that a report has been made, or is about to be made.



Step 5:

Following a report, it is important to both protect confidentiality and the interests of the child and family at all times, as well as natural justice for the process.