

AU Sport Child Safe Environment Policy

Background:

On 22 October 2018, the second phase of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* commence. This means the child safe environments provisions are spread across two acts: the *Children's Protection Act 1993* and the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*.

Everyone involved in a recreation group or sporting club has a responsibility to care and protect any children (those under the age of 18 years of age) who participate in their club.

The Children's Protection Act 1993 requires that organisations must:

- Develop policies and procedures to establish and maintain child safe environments
- Lodge a "Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement" with the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD - Families SA).
- Report a reasonable suspicion or incidences of abuse or neglect

The *Children's Protection Act 1993* makes it a legal requirement for certain people to report a reasonable suspicion or incidences of abuse or neglect. This obligation is known as mandatory notification and a penalty may stem from an individual's failure to comply.

Notifications must be made to [Families SA Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78](#).

Reasonable grounds may include:

- A disclosure of abuse by a child
- Professional judgement, based on the notifier's experience and observations
- Discourse by a child or an adult that a child is being abused or is at risk

Mandated notifiers are an employer of, or **volunteer** in, a government or **non-government organisation that provides** health, welfare, education, **sporting or recreational**, child care or residential **services wholly or partly for children**.

These people:

- a) Are engaged in the actual delivery of those services to children; or
- b) Hold a management position in the relevant organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, or access to personal information of children.

Staff and volunteers of recreation and sporting bodies who work with children fit these descriptions and so have a legal obligation (are mandated) to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

AU Sport Policy:

AU Sport is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all young people and children accessing our services or our clubs. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff & volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

AU Sport acknowledges that our staff, members and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of young people involved in sport. AU Sport aims to continue this and to take measures to protect the safety and welfare of young people participating in sport by applying the principles of good practice:

1. Identify, analyse and treating risk of harm

AU Sport has a comprehensive risk management policy and review process. As part of this process, AU Sport and AU Sport Clubs are annually required to assess their child protection practices and treat any risk that is identified.

2. Ensure that AU Sport policies and practices are in line with child safe environments

AU Sport shall ensure that its child protection processes are in line with the University of Adelaide policies and government regulations; and shall consider all of its activities including travelling teams.

All AU Sport Clubs are also required to ensure that their policies and practices are also in line with principles of good practice. AU Sport also advises all Clubs to also consider the child protection policies and 'Keeping Child Safe' guidelines set by their State Sporting Organisation (SSO).

In line with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, AU Sport and Clubs will review and update all policies relating to Child Safe Environments no later than every 5 years or prior if needed.

3. Providing guidelines on:

a. Supervision

Members under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. AU Sport recommends a level of supervision adequate and relative to the members' age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience, nature of activity and nature of the venue. If a member finds a member under the age of 18 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety until the parent/guardian or supervisor can be found.

Parents must arrive on time to collect their child for reasons of courtesy and safety at a location agreed to by AU Sport or the Club. If it appears a member will be left alone at the end of AU Sport/club activities with just one child, they need to ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

b. Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from AU Sport/club activities (e.g. practice and games) or making suitable arrangements with others (this could include allowing the child to transport themselves to training via bike, public transport or driving if they have a licence).

For those who are able to drive, AU Sport and clubs understand that there is passenger and night driving restrictions (ie no passengers aged between 16 – 20 except immediate family allowed; and no driving between midnight and 5am) placed on those drivers who are under the age of 25 and have a P1 driver's licence. Exemptions are in place for those involved in sport and AU Sport or the club are able to provide documentation to support this fact if needed. (For more information: mylicence.sa.gov.au).

Where AU Sport or a Club makes arrangements for the transportation of children (e.g. for away or overnight trips), the agreements will be in line with the 'AU Sport Safe Travel' policy where AU Sport/Club will conduct a risk assessment that includes ensuring vehicles are adequately insured, the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and appropriate safety measures are available (e.g. fitted working seatbelts; the child is not left alone with the driver).

c. Taking and using images of children

Images of children cannot be used inappropriately or illegally. AU Sport requires that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian

before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used. We also require the privacy of others to be respected and disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

AU Sport recognises and respects that some SSOs have requirements where there is no photography/video recording allowed at their junior competitions or that permission from all involved must be sought before photography/video recording occurs.

AU Sport will only use an image of a child in good faith. We will only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to the sport and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport, displays its successes, etc. If AU Sport or one of our clubs uses an image of a child, we will avoid naming or identifying the child or wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname. We will not display personal information such as a residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. We will not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc as this information can be used as grooming tools by other persons.

d. Social Media

AU Sport and its clubs use social media tools, especially Facebook, as a means to communicate with members. AU Sport will follow the guidelines set out in the 'AU Sport Social Media Guidelines', however, special considerations should be made when anyone under the age of 18 is involved. The following will be considered:

- AU Sport and its clubs will not rely solely on social media to communicate key information to members to ensure that those who are not on social media are not excluded from any information.
- All social media communication should be suitable in content and language for those using the page/group.
- Anti-bullying and harassment should be promoted and those involved in bullying behaviours should be counselled in line with relevant AU Sport or Club policies.
- AU Sport recommends that, if an official club group is established for members who are juniors, that at least two senior members such as a coach, junior coordinator or Child Safe Officer, who have all met the club's screening process, be added as administrators to monitor the group. The adding of parents to the group is at the discretion of the administrators. If the focus of

the group is to relay key information, parents should be added under clear guidelines. If it is a social/friendship group, then the adding of parents is not needed.

4. Choosing suitable employees and volunteers and support/ train them for their role

AU Sport will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in prescribed positions).

This may be achieved using a range of screening measures such as the Department of Human Services (DHS) Working with Children Checks (WWCC), signed declarations, referee checks, and other relevant background checks. Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

AU Sport will ensure that 'Working with Children Checks' are conducted for employees and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law. Clubs are required to ensure that the same checks are done for their volunteers.

5. Ensure 'Codes of Conduct' for adults and children are supported and followed

AU Sport has a general 'Code of Conduct' and will ensure that there are specific codes for roles that specify standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with young people and children. AU Sport shall also empower and promote the participation of young people in the decision-making process.

AU Sport Clubs are expected to do the same at their level.

6. Assist our clubs to provide a child safe environment

On behalf of all AU Sport Clubs, AU Sport will drive Child Safe Environments and will maintain a 'Compliance Statement'. In return, Clubs must ensure that they are meeting the requirements of Child Safe Environments at Adelaide University Sport.

Support for what is required of clubs is outlined in AU Sport Child Safe Environments and Club's Guidelines.

7. Ensure that volunteers and staff, especially those who take up the role of 'Child safe officers' / 'Member protection officers', are well trained and supported in their role

AU Sport will ensure that volunteers and employees, who work with children or have access to their records, have ongoing supervision, support and training such that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child-safe environment. AU Sport will also support mandated notifiers (staff/volunteers of AU Sport and our clubs who are engaged in the actual delivery of sport and recreation to children or hold a management position where their duties include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children) under the Act to meet their legal obligation to notify of any reasonable suspicion of child abuse.

AU Sport SDOs will enable Member Protection and Child Safe Officer training and will be the first point of call for all clubs on child safety issues. For Clubs that have official junior programs, AU Sport recommends that they appoint and support their own Child Safe Officer.

Definitions:

Member Protection Information Officers (MPIOs) play an important role as they are the persons responsible for providing information and options to an individual making a complaint or raising a concern, as well as giving support during the process.

The role of the **Child Safe Officer** is to deliver advice and awareness training within their club, having attained certain competencies. They can also be the first point of contact for members who have concerns about a child or young person within the organisation or group.

8. Report and respond appropriately to suspected abuse and neglect

AU Sport will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

AU Sport will make all volunteers and employees aware of their responsibilities under respective state laws if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

In addition to any legal obligation, if any person feels another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a young person or child; or is breaching the code(s) of practice set out, they may make an internal complaint. Please refer to our 'Complaints Handling Policy' to understand the steps involved. This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how the AU Sport will deal with the problem.

This policy is to be used in conjunction with:

1. AU Sport Child Protection Process (Attachment 1)
2. Staff Guidelines and Process Document
3. Child Safe Environments and AU Sport Clubs Guidelines
4. Procedures for obtaining and accessing DHS Working with Children Check information for an individual

Attachment 1: AU Sport Child Protection Process

This document outlines the process that AU Sport, AU Sport Clubs with official junior programs and AU Sport Clubs with no official junior program, but may have members under the age of 18, will do to ensure that it is providing a child safe environment and meeting its child protection requirements.

AU Sport:

1. AU Sport updates its 'Compliance Statement' with Department for Education and Child Development (www.families.sa.gov.au/childsafe) whenever relevant policies and practices are adopted, varied or substituted.
2. Board to accept and promote policy and review at least every 5 years or as needed
3. Register and maintain AU Sport as a registered organisation with Screening Unit, Department of Human Services for the purpose of screen checks.
Staff to utilise 'screen check staff guidelines'
4. Assist clubs and members through the process of obtaining a screen check
5. SDO to undertake the following training:
 - a. Free online training via 'Play by the Rules'
 - i. Play by the rules – 'Child Protection' and 'Harassment and discrimination'
 - ii. Member Protection Officer training. This course includes a three-hour face to face training
 - iii. Complaints Handling training
 - b. Child Safe Officers course through the Office for Recreation and Sport.
 - c. Any other relevant training that may be suitable.
6. Review all activities and guidelines especially for UniSport events or when travel is involved.
7. Ensure all AU Sport clubs are following the steps outlined in the 'AU Sport Child Safe Clubs Guidelines'

8. Maintain a database of those who have sought a Working with Children Check (WWCC)
9. To provide ongoing information and support to AU Sport Clubs. Promote the free online training provided by 'Play by the Rules' and encourage clubs to understand their SSO requirements.
10. Provide support to mandated notifiers under the Act to meet their legal obligation to notify of any reasonable suspicion of child abuse.
This support should include:
 - Inductions and position/task descriptions
 - Ongoing support and supervision
 - Opportunity to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil the role as a mandated notifier. Training could include courses provided by 'Play by the Rules', Office for Recreation and Sport and AU Sport
 - Access to a Member Protection Officer or counselling services
11. Review annually as part of the 'AU Sport Risk Management Review' program