

# KEW EAST BASKETBALL CLUB

## CHILD SAFETY GUIDELINES

### **Background**

The Child Safe Standards provide a framework to identify gaps and improve policy and practices around child safety. The Standards apply to all organisations that provide services to children.

The standards are:

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

### **Purpose:**

Children and young people expect and deserve to be safe when participating in club-related activities. These Guidelines are intended to support personnel by providing recommendations of standards of care to minimise risks to children and protect them from abuse and neglect.

### **Definitions:**

***Refer to definitions in the Kew East Basketball Club Child Safe policy***

#### ***Additional definitions:***

Club Representative means a Club administrator, officeholder, employee, volunteer, team manager, coach or any other person with an official role with the Club.

Left Alone means accompanied by only one other person, who may be an adult

Unattended means without appropriate supervision of any kind

## **Guidelines:**

### **Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements**

1. Child safety is a priority for all who participate in the Club's activities.
2. Child safety issues will be discussed in Committee of Management meetings. Policies and guidelines will be regularly reviewed.
- 1.3 The Committee of Management and other Club Representatives will communicate issues and recommendations relating to child safety to all others who participate in club activities regularly.

### **Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety**

Please refer to the Kew East Basketball Club Child Safe Policy

### **Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children**

1. Any use of language, comments and gestures that are:
  - i) discriminatory, sexist or racist or homophobic;
  - ii) derogatory, belittling, negative;
  - iii) intended to threaten, frighten or intimidate; or
  - iv) profane (swearing).will not be tolerated.
2. Any sexual behaviour or contact between a Club Representative and child or young person is prohibited.
3. Club representatives should act as positive role models to children and young people and as such Club representatives are encouraged not to smoke or drink alcohol in front of children or young people.
4. Any case of use, possession and supply of alcohol or drugs (performance enhancing, illicit or prescription drugs), that is perceived to potentially be an illegal act will be referred to the police, without exception.
5. Further information regarding the standard of behaviour expected of all who take part in the Club's activities is included in the Basketball Victoria Code of Conduct

### **Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel**

1. All Club representatives, 18 years and over must have a current and valid Working with Children Check.
2. The Kew East Basketball Club Code of Conduct will be distributed to all Club Representatives (including but not exclusive to Committee of Management, Team Managers, Coaches, Parents, Contractors and Volunteers) who will be asked to acknowledge that they have read and understood it.
3. All people taking part in Club activities will be encouraged to attend child safe training provided by the Club or the HBA or any other organisation.

#### **Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse**

1. We take our legal responsibilities seriously, including:
  - a. **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child 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 18 have an obligation to report that information to the police.
  - b. **Option to report:** if a person believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from any form of child abuse, they may disclose that information to the police or the appropriate government authority.
  - c. **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.
2. Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.
3. Any incident (s) of suspected child abuse must be reported to the Child Safety Officer (The Club President) and to the Head of the Organisation (General Manager of the HBA)
4. A procedure for reporting any incident(s) of suspected child abuse is in Attachment 1.

#### **Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse**

1. Transporting Children
  - a) Transporting children and young people to or from training or match venues by Club Representatives alone is discouraged. However, it is recognised that at times this is not practical.
  - b) if the driver is not a parent or sibling, then permission must to be sought from the child or young person's parent or guardian. It must be expressly given and it must be given in writing before any transportation is to take place (for example, by email or text) unless it is a case of an emergency.
- 6.2 Change Rooms

The following general principles are considered best practice for use of change rooms (as opposed to going to the bathroom):

- a) Club Representatives and parents where practically possible should not be in one-on-one situations with a child or young person, who is not their own child, when they are changing in a change room;
- b) Children or young people who identify as transgender (people whose gender identity is different from the sex assigned to them at birth) should be consulted on their preference of change rooms and their wishes respected at all time;
- c) Where practically possible or appropriate a Buddy System should be implemented, where children or young people go the change room and or bathroom in pairs;
- d) Male Club Representatives must not enter female change rooms and female Club Representatives must not enter male change rooms. Male participants in club activities may enter female change rooms if they are under 7 years of age and under the supervision of a parent or guardian. Female participants in club activities may enter male change rooms if they are under 7 years of age and under the supervision of a parent or guardian.
- e) There should be no photography of children or young people in a state of undress in the change room or bathroom. If images are taken they must be deleted and destroyed immediately and the person taking the photos should be immediately reported to the CDBA.

### 6.3 Physical Contact

- a) Club representatives should avoid all unnecessary physical contact with children or young people. However, there may be situations where some physical contact may be required in the interests of training or coaching the child or young person.
- b) Club Representatives should avoid contact with a child or young person that:
  - i. would appear to have a sexual or suggestive connotation or purpose;
  - ii. causes pain or distress to the child or young person (for example physical or verbal discipline);
  - iii. is initiated against the wishes of the child or young person.

### 4. Supervision of Children

- a) Children and young people should not be left unattended at the completion of training or matches.
- b) Where possible, Club Representatives should try and avoid a situation where they are left alone with a child or young person.

### 5. Images of Children

- (a) When photographing or videoing children Club Representatives should (in the case of a child who is not their own) obtain permission from the child's parent or guardian before taking an image of a child. They should also ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used (i.e. website, social media, newsletters and coaching and scouting purposes);

(b) The use of camera phones, video cameras or cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets is not permitted

(c) Any person taking regular photos or video on behalf of Club must have a current and valid Working with Children Check.

6. Communication:

a) Club representatives should keep all direct communication with children and young people to issues directly associated with club activities (training and game schedules and information).

b) The Club acknowledges the emergence of new technology and communication media and wishes to enable electronic and social media to be used to benefit club and its participants.

c) Wherever possible, email, text messages and social media communications sent to a child or young person should be copied to their parent or guardian.

d) Club Representatives should not request a child to keep a communication secret from their parents.

**Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.**

1. Children of all culturally or linguistically diverse background are encouraged to participate fully in all club activities.

2. Children are encouraged to speak up about any concerns they have with the confidence that they will be treated with respect, be listened to and be advocated for.

## **APPENDIX I:**

### **Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse**

(source: Early Learning Association Australia Child Safe Environment Policy)

#### **Overview**

- All Club Representatives **must act** when they form a reasonable belief or have a suspicion that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused.
- Club Representatives **must seek advice** from the Child Safety Officer, Child First and/or Victoria Police if they are uncertain about whether they have sufficient grounds to form a reasonable belief.
- Records are kept about all child safety concerns or complaints. These records contain comprehensive descriptions of incidents/ issues of concern and provide evidence for actions taken, including reports made to statutory authorities or professional bodies and follow-up actions to be completed. The records are stored in accordance with the Club's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.
- Privacy is maintained, and information is only disclosed on a need-to-know basis.
- Permission is not required from parents/guardians of a child to make a report where abuse is suspected.

#### **Managing a disclosure**

Strategies include:

- Let the child talk about their concerns in their own time and in their own words
- Give them your full attention, the time and a quiet space in which to do this and be a supportive and reassuring listener
- Remain calm and use a neutral non-judgmental tone
- Comfort the child if they are distressed
- Record the child's disclosure using the child's words.
- Tell the child that telling you is the right thing to do and that what has happened is not their fault
- Let them know that you will act on this information and that you will need to let other people know so that they can help the child
- It is the role of DHHS and/or Child Protection and/or Victoria Police to investigate. DO NOT take any steps to investigate. Avoid asking investigative or invasive questions which may cause the child to withdraw and may interfere with an investigation. Avoid going over information repeatedly.

#### **Reporting to authorities**

- If a child is in immediate danger ensure their safety and call emergency services on 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance.
- If there is a suspicion of sexual abuse of a child (including grooming) contact Victoria Police and the Child Safety Officer.
- If there is an allegation of abuse by a Club Representative, the matter must be immediately reported directly to Victoria Police.
- To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family or the community, call the nearest DHHS office in your region during business hours or after hours the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours, 7 days a week and toll free within Victoria). Note: this is an emergency service for weekends and after hours only, and cases reported to the Child Protection Crisis Line will be referred to the relevant DHHS office on the following working day
- Provide the following information:
  - the child's name, age and address
  - the reason for believing that the injury or behaviour is the result of abuse or neglect

- an assessment of immediate danger to the child/ren (the person making the report may be questioned regarding knowledge of the current location of the alleged abuser/s)
  - a description of the injury or behaviour observed
  - the current location of the child
  - knowledge of other services that support or are involved with the family
  - any other information about the family
  - any specific details that will help the child, such as cultural background, need for an interpreter or disability support requirements.
- A notification should be made, even if the notifier does not have all the necessary information. There are two types of notifications to be made in relation to significant concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a child: a referral to Child FIRST (Family Services) or a report to Child Protection (see below).
  - Club Representatives must notify the Child Safety Officer and the Head of the Organisation of all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse
  - The Head of the Organisation will report to the Commission for Children and Young People in line with the requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme (see below).

### **Making a referral to Child FIRST**

A referral to **Child FIRST** by the Child Safety Officer should be considered if, after taking into account the available information, there are significant concerns for a child's wellbeing and the child is not in immediate need of protection. This may include circumstances when there are:

- significant parenting problems that may be affecting the child's development
- family conflict, including family breakdown
- families under pressure, due to a family member's physical or mental illness, substance misuse, disability or bereavement
- young, isolated and/or unsupported families
- families experiencing significant social or economic disadvantage that may adversely impact on a child's care or development.

Child FIRST provides a consolidated intake service to Family Services within sub-regional catchments. Child FIRST ensures that vulnerable children, young people and their families are linked effectively into relevant services, and this may be the best way to connect children, young people and their families with the services they need.

### **Making a report to Child Protection**

A report to **Child Protection** should be made if, after taking into account the available information, the Child Safety Officer forms a view that the child **is** in need of protection because:

- the harm or risk of harm has a serious impact on the child's immediate safety, stability and/or development
- the harm or risk of harm is persistent and entrenched, and is likely to have a serious impact on the child's safety, stability and/or development
- the child's parents/guardians are unwilling or unable to protect the child or young person from harm.

Upon receipt of a credible report, Child Protection will seek further information, often from professionals who may already be involved with the child or family, to determine whether further action is required. In determining what steps to take, Child Protection will also consider any concerns previously reported with regard to the child or young person. In most circumstances, Child Protection will inform the notifier of the outcome of investigations.

When reporting concerns of child abuse and/or neglect, it is important to remember that:

- a failure to notify the Department of Health and Human Services is an offence under section 182 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*
- Child Protection must be notified as soon as practicable
- it is not necessary to prove that abuse has taken place, only to provide reasonable grounds (refer to Definitions) for the belief
- permission from parents/guardians or caregivers is **not required** to make a notification, nor do they need to be informed that a notification is being or has been made
- if a notification is made in good faith, the notifier cannot be held legally liable for any consequences, regardless of the outcome of the notification
- the identity of the notifier will remain confidential unless the notifier chooses to inform the child and/or family, or if the notifier consents in writing to the disclosure of their identity, or if the court decides that this information must be disclosed
- the notifier may have an ongoing role, including:
  - acting as a support person in interviews with the child or young person
  - attending a case conference
  - participating in case-planning meetings
  - continuing to monitor the child's behaviour and their interactions with others
  - observing/monitoring the conditions of a protective court order that may relate to access or contact with a parent/guardian and following KEBC's procedures where the conditions are breached
  - liaising with other professionals and child protection officers in relation to a child or young person's wellbeing
  - providing written reports for case-planning meetings or court proceedings in relation to the child's wellbeing or progress.

### **Contacting Parents/Carers**

Parents/guardians should only be advised that a notification has been made after discussion with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared.

### **The Reportable Conduct Scheme**

The Head of the Organisation must initially notify the Commission for Children and Young People of a reportable allegation within three business days and update the Commission of progress within 30 calendar days.'

The Head of the Organisation must also investigate the reportable allegation and provide the findings of the investigation to the Commission. The Club must also respond to the Commission when contacted for information.

### **Support when making a report**

Making the decision to report can be a challenging and it is important to make use of available supports to guide your practice. Support is available from:

- The Child Safety Officer
- The Head of the Organisation
- DHHS Child Protection and Child First
- Department of Education and Training staff
- Commission for Children and Young People
- The Camberwell District Basketball Association

### **Resources**

Department of Education and Training PROTECT Portal: [www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)



The Department of Education and Training's PROTECT portal provides tools and resources to assist in responding to child abuse or potential child abuse, including:

The flowchart: *Four critical actions for early childhood services: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse*, provides a summary of the critical actions to take:

Commission for Children and Young People: [www.ccyp.vic.gov.au](http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au)

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is being phased in from 1 July 2017 and is administered by the Commission for Children and Young People.