

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

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Commitment to the safety of children and young people

Overview

The SA Athletic League (SAAL) is committed to the safety of children and young people. This policy is part of SAAL's obligations to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people and to meet its child safe environments compliance. This policy outlines the responsibilities and legal obligations of individuals associated with the SAAL to safeguard children and young people. We endeavour to provide safe and respectful and environments and procedures where children and young people have a voice and can feel free to express their concerns. If a child or young person's safety and wellbeing is compromised, we will respond appropriately to concerns, including making a mandatory notification where required.

Our policy complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to members, employees, volunteers and coaches of the SAAL.

Communication

We support the rights of the child and will always act to ensure that a child safe environment is maintained. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our SAAL Team and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure and safe environment for all participants. The SAAL acknowledges the valuable contribution made by the employees, volunteers and coaches we encourage their active participating in providing a safe, fair, and inclusive environment for all participants. The SAAL will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining a child-safe environment in our clubs and squads.

This policy will be available to all members of the SAAL, via our TeamApp website and will be highlighted in our welcome email on registration. The Volunteers, Employees and Coaches will be provided with our child safe policy as part of their induction or registration, and will need to undergo a mandatory Working with Children Check before undertaking any work or volunteering for the SAAL.

Children and young people are encouraged to provide feedback to our child safety representative, of whom will be made known through information provided to the parents and child at registration. Child and young people's rights are included in the introduction leaflet at registration, which stipulates that children have a rights to be safe and listened to, and makes recommendations on the procedures to follow if they do feel unsafe. Parents will also be encouraged to have discussions with their children about what a violation to their safety looks like, and raising any concerns with the SAAL. Alternatively, children and young people are encouraged to contact the SAAL via email at admin@saal.org.au independently of their parents, should the situation prevail.

Code of Conduct

Our code of conduct specifies the standards of behaviour and care that we expect of adults when they deal and interact with children and young people. Please also refer to our Code of Conduct. The code clearly describes professional boundaries, ethical behaviour, and unacceptable behaviour. We will endeavour to promote and protect the safety of young people by encouraging our members, volunteers and employees to:

- Adhere to the SAAL's child safe policy at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people
- Treat everyone, including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect and honesty and ensure equity is upheld
- Be a positive role model to children and young people in all conduct with them
- Set clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between yourself and children and young people – boundaries help everyone to understand their role
- Listen and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people
- Be alert to bullying behaviours and responding promptly and appropriately
- Ensuring another adult is always present or in sight when conducting one to one consulting, coaching, instruction or other activity
- Be alert to children and young people who have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm and reporting this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian

Unacceptable behaviour, which may be deemed to be a breach of this code, includes:

- Undertaking unlawful activity with or in relation to a child;
- Engaging in an activity likely to cause any physical, sexual or emotional harm to a child;
- abusing the trust that comes with being engaged by the SAAL;
- Being alone with a child unnecessarily;
- Arranging personal contact, including online contact, with children or young people they work with for a purpose unrelated to their work activities;
- Discriminating against any child or their family members;
- Disclosing personal or sensitive information about a child, including images of a child, without the consent of the child or young person and/or the consent of their parent or legal guardian (except where this is required for mandatory reporting or other legal requirements);
- Using inappropriate language in the presence of children or young people;

- Showing or providing children or young people with access to inappropriate images or material;
- Undertaking work activities with children or young people when under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs; and
- Ignoring or disregarding any suspected or disclosed risk of harm to a child or young person.

A breach of the Code of Conduct can be reported verbally or in writing to the SAAL Office via phone 0404 350 507 or email admin@saal.org.au.

Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible dismissal and breaches may also lead to criminal proceedings.

Supervision

Members under the age of 18 must have a registered South Australian Athletic League coach or be supervised at all times by a responsible adult who has registered with the League and is bound by its' policies. If a member finds a member under the age of 18 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety, and supervise accordingly.

Use of technology and photography

The South Australian Athletic League acknowledges that in South Australia, under the Summary Offences Act 1953 a person must not engage in indecent filming. Images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. The SAAL require that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent or guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own. They will also make sure that the parent or guardian understands how the image will be used.

To respect people's privacy, we do not allow camera phones, videos and cameras to be used inside changing areas, showers and toilets which we control or are used in connection with our clubs, groups, or competitions. When using a photo of a child, we will not name or identify the child or publish personal information, such as residential address, email address or telephone number, without the consent of the child's parent or guardian. We will only use images of children that are relevant to the SAAL's activities, and we will ensure that they are suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the League. During the registration process we will seek permission from a child's parent or guardian before using their images.

Recruitment of Suitable Employees and Volunteers

The SAAL will ensure that the organisation takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children, especially those in positions that involve contact with children. This may be achieved using a range of screening measures and that they meet the requirements of the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016. Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

In accordance with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, our organisation is registered with the DHS Screening Unit and we link all Working with Children Checks (WWCC). The SAAL will ensure that all paid and unpaid workers, regardless of their involvement with children, hold a current, not prohibited WWCC. WWCCs need to be renewed every 5 years and the status remains as not prohibited. Verification of all WWCCs will be done online through the Organisation Portal via the DHS Screening Unit.

We will immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when we become aware of certain information regarding any person involved with our organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

For SAAL employees, position descriptions will include a description with commitment to child safety and wellbeing and at least two referee checks will be conducted before offering employment.

Training, supervision and support for workers

The SAAL will ensure that all our employees and volunteers who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and Mandatory Notification training on a yearly basis. Our goal is to develop their skills and capacity and to enhance their performance so we can maintain a child-safe environment in our clubs and squads.

We have strategies in place to supervise, train and support workers to understand our organisation's child safe policy, their mandatory reporting obligations, how to build culturally safe environments and their responsibilities to create a child safe and friendly environment. Our strategies include:

- Training:
 - ensure all workers read and understand the Mandatory Notification Information Booklet available at:
https://dhs.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF during induction
- Support:
 - an induction process for all new employees and volunteers including a copy of this policy document
 - appointing a child safety officer who has an educative role within our organisation

Members under the age of 18 must have a registered South Australian Athletic League coach or be supervised at all times by a responsible adult who has registered with the League and is bound by its' Policies and Codes of Conduct. If a member finds a member under the age of 18 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety.

Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected harm and risk of harm

We aim to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of harm. Section 17 of the Safety Act defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

Mandated notifiers in our organisation are employees and volunteers who:

- provide services to children and young people
- hold a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people.

Mandated notifiers have a legal obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable belief that a child or young person is or may be at risk of harm. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000. In cases involving Aboriginal children and young people, support is provided by Yaitya Tirramangkotti - an Aboriginal team, via the CARL number.

Even if not a mandated reporter, any person can report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person. The individual who identifies the harm or risk of harm is encouraged to make the report to authorities and can request the support from another worker to do so if required.

Information about making appropriate reports of harm or risk of harm is available from the South Australian Department of Child Protection website: <https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>.

All adult workers (even if not a mandated notifier) have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse to the police and to protect a child from sexual abuse. Failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence.

Following a report being made to CARL or SAPOL workers must make an internal report to management.

We will be guided by the Department for Child Protection and/or SAPOL after a report has been made as to whether we can conduct an internal investigation.

If a worker is reported to CARL or SAPOL for causing harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, they will be removed from any role that involves working with any child or young person until authorities have concluded their investigation.

Following a report to CARL or SAPOL we will support the child or young person by:

- referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
- continuing to provide a service to the child, young person and their family and monitor their circumstances.

We will document all information received regarding the report and store this securely in a separate file.

Reporting and responding to general complaints or feedback

Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensures that children, young people and their families feel valued and respected and enables us to improve the quality of our service. Children, young people and their families are informed that they can provide feedback or make a complaint as part of their welcome pack, when they register.

Compliments, complaints or feedback can be provided verbally or in writing the SAAL Office via phone 0404 350 507 or email admin@saal.org.au.

We will deal with all complaints and feedback received from children, young people or their families promptly, sensitively, fairly and in a timely fashion. We will:

- listen to the complaint/feedback
- if a worker receives a complaint, they must forward it to management as soon as possible
- management or the SAAL office will respond to the complainant with an outcome as soon as possible
- clearly document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback
- make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

If the child, young person or their family is not happy with the outcome from the complaints process they can contact the:

- Australian Human Rights Commission Online: www.humanrights.gov.au Tel: 1300 656 419
- South Australian Equal Opportunities Commission (for complaints relating to discrimination) Online: www.eoc.sa.gov.au Tel: 08 8207 1977.

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Risk management

The South Australian Athletic League (SAAL) is committed to minimising specific risks to children and young people by taking actions to minimise and manage each risk.

The below table identifies the risks, and what actions the SAAL should take to minimise the risk.

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Culture of organisation is not child-safe focussed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child focused Code of Conduct is in place that sets the behavioural standards expected including what happens when a breach occurs. • The SAAL organisation has a strong commitment to the safety of children and young people, and this is reflected in our policies and practices. • The SAAL meet the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> and maintain current, not prohibited Working with Children Checks
Organisational workers harm children/young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All workers have WWCC with ‘not prohibited’ result prior to working with children and young people • WWCCs updated every 5 years and status remains as not prohibited • Children and young people and their families have access to our Safe Guarding Children and Young People Policy and our complaints and feedback process
A SAAL member volunteer or coach does not understand the obligations to report harm and risk of harm to the Child Abuse Report Line (or SA Police if child/young person is at immediate risk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees, coaches and volunteers will be provided with the Mandatory Notification Information Booklet each year and then be encouraged to undertake and keep refreshed the Safe Environments – Through their Eyes or Responding to Risk of Harm and Neglect – Education and Care training. • The SAAL encourages all members to abide by the child safe environments policy and Code of Conduct
Physical contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of services being provided

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where physical contact is required, this is undertaken in a safe way by explaining why contact is required and what will happen, and asking the child/young person for their permission (or their family if this is more appropriate) before proceeding • Unnecessary physical contact is not allowed
Online communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SAAL has a strict and comprehensive social media policy
Transport of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers must not transport a child or young person unless specifically approved by a parent, carer or legal guardian • In the event of athletes that require transport by a SAAL coach, member, employee or volunteer, parents/guardians must provide consent before transporting a child or young person • The driver must have a valid, unrestricted driver's licence • The vehicle must be registered, insured and in roadworthy condition
Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people are to be supervised by parents/guardians at all times • When providing one to one consultation with a child or young person, it will be in line of sight of another adult • If child/young person not collected by parent/guardian at end of a SAAL meet, two adults are to stay with child/young person until they are collected
Taking images of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent of child young person and their parent/guardian is provided is required on registration. • Disclosure will be made as to how the image is to be used and consent must be provided by the child, young person and parent/guardian
Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a risk register that is reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness. • Conduct risk assessments for all activities. • Ensure all equipment is in good working order.
Privacy and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All documents containing confidential information will be stored privately in a locked filing cabinet (or similar place with restricted access) • Digital files containing confidential information shall be protected electronically by restricting the access to only those requiring it to perform their duties • Workers must not disclose information regarding any child or young person without written consent of the child, young person and their parent/guardian
Change room requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phones, cameras and recording devices must not be used in change rooms at SAAL events. • Parents, carers or legal guardians are required to supervise their child's privacy in changerooms during SAAL events.

Related policies and procedures

SAAL Code of Conduct

Policy review

The SAAL will, at a minimum, review the policies and procedures once every 5 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017.

We will lodge a new child safe environments compliance statement with the Department of Human Services each time we review and update this policy.