



# **NSW FENCING ASSOCIATION**

## **Child Safeguarding Policy**

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## 1. SUMMARY

The NSW Fencing Association (NSWFA) seeks to provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone involved in the sport of fencing.

This Child Safeguarding Policy and Child Safe Practices (Annexure A) states how we will deliver on our commitments to safeguarding children and young people involved in fencing activities and programs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Make a strong commitment to child safety through creating, maintaining and promoting a child safe culture within fencing
- Do our best to ensure that everyone involved in fencing is educated and informed of their responsibilities to protect and look after children and young people, including identifying possible child abuse and taking appropriate action
- Provide a clear statement about the standards of behaviour expected towards and in the presence of children and young people and the behaviours that are not acceptable
- Comply with NSW and Australian law in dealing with alleged child abuse and improper conduct towards children and young people
- Make it clear that any and all known or suspected child abuse will be reported to the NSW Police and NSW child protection authorities as required by law (See sections 6 and 7)
- As well as reporting alleged and suspected child abuse to the police and child protection authorities, NSWFA will refer the matter to the AFF to be dealt with, as appropriate, under its Member Protection Policy and/or referral to Sport Integrity Australia. NSWFA will also consider taking action under our Code of Conduct

This policy should be considered in conjunction with:

The Australian Fencing Federation (AFF) Member Protection Policy

The National Integrity Framework – Sport Integrity Australia

The NSWFA Code of Conduct

NSW child protection legislation including the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, the *Child Protection (Working With Children Check) Act 2012* and Regulations

References to *children and young people* mean anyone under the age of 18.

References to *parents* include guardians and carers.

Policy owner: NSW FENCING ASSOCIATION (NSWFA)

Approved by: NSWFA Board

Date approved: 25 August 2021

Next review date: 25 August 2022

## **2. WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO?**

This Policy applies to the NSWFA and its members, to affiliated Clubs and their members and to all people who are associated with NSW Fencing. This includes:

- a. members of NSWFA as defined in the constitution
- b. persons elected or appointed to the NSWFA Board and to member Club committees
- c. officials appointed by NSWFA
- d. coaches
- e. volunteers
- f. employees, contractors and casual staff
- g. proprietors of fencing clubs who are members of the NSWFA
- h. all participants in NSWFA activities, including competitions, training, camps and tours
- i. all participants in AFF events hosted by NSWFA

All people and organisations to which this Policy applies must comply with this Policy:

- in relation to any dealings they have with a child or young person arising from their involvement in any capacity with fencing;
- in relation to their membership of the NSWFA.

Interactions between people associated with NSW Fencing and a child or young person where there is no direct or indirect link to fencing or a fencing organisation do not fall within the scope of this policy, unless the conduct has resulted in loss of a person's WWCC clearance and/or they have been barred from working with children. In these circumstances we will take appropriate action to ensure children and young people are protected.

## **3. OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **1 We are committed to keeping children and young people safe**

- Through this Child Safeguarding Policy and the accompanying Child Safe Practices, we document our clear commitment to keeping children and young people in our responsible care safe from abuse and neglect.
- We communicate our commitment to all our staff and volunteers and give them access to the Policy which includes this commitment statement.
- A member of the NSWFA Board has responsibility for child safeguarding and member protection. The Director of Member and Child Protection has specific governance responsibility for policy review, the handling of child protection reports and WWCC compliance.

### **2 We promote equity and respect diversity**

- We actively anticipate children’s and young people’s diverse circumstances and respond in a way that recognises their individual needs.
- We give all children and young people access to information, support, and complaints processes.
- We consider the needs of all children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, those with a disability, LGBTQI children and young people.

### **3 Our staff and volunteers know the behaviour we expect**

- We endeavor to ensure that every person involved in our sport understands their responsibilities and the behaviour we expect from them in relation to keeping children and young people safe from abuse and neglect through application of our Child Safe Practices.
- Our Child Safe Practices are endorsed by the AFF and approved by the NSWFA Board and outline our expectations for behaviour towards children and young people.
- Our staff and volunteers know and understand the Child Safeguarding Policy and the responsibility it places on them.
- Our staff and volunteers confirm, in writing, that they have read and are committed to the Child Safeguarding Policy and will follow our Child Safe Practices.

### **4 We minimise the likelihood of recruiting a person who is unsuitable**

- We have appropriate screening measures to minimise the risk that we might recruit staff or volunteers who are unsuitable to work/volunteer with children and young people.
- We comply with the NSW WWCC requirements.

### **5 Induction and training are part of our commitment**

- We will provide all new staff, volunteers, and participants with information about our commitment to Child Safety including this Child Safeguarding Policy and Child Safe Practices.
- We provide ongoing education and training for our staff and volunteers to ensure child safety information is provided and updated as required.
- We ensure that our staff and volunteers have up-to-date information relevant to specific legislation applying in NSW.

### **6 We encourage the involvement of children and young people and their parents or carers**

- We involve and communicate with children and young people and their families in developing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment. We will provide information to children and young people and their carers on our website about:

- (i) our commitment to keeping children and young people safe and communicating their rights;
- (ii) the behaviour we expect of all NSWFA participants including staff, volunteers, athletes and their families;
- (iii) our process for responding to child abuse.
- We will establish a Child Safe Liaison Group of young fencers to provide feedback and advice to the Board about the needs and expectations of young fencers.
- We respect diversity and seek to facilitate effective communication and involvement.

## **7 Our staff and volunteers understand their responsibility for reporting child abuse**

- Our policy and procedures for responding to child abuse are approved and endorsed by the NSWFA Board and apply to all our staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers must:
  - (i) immediately report abuse or neglect they become aware of and any concerns with policies, practices or the behaviour of staff and volunteers;
  - (ii) meet any legislated mandatory or other jurisdictional reporting requirements;
  - (iii) follow a specified process when reporting abuse or neglect.
- Our staff and volunteers are aware of this Child Safeguarding Policy, our Child Safe Practices and the NSWFA Code of Conduct and understand how these policies apply to their roles.
- We document any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding child abuse and child safety and monitor responses to all allegations, disclosures, or concerns. We keep a record of all matters relating to child abuse and child safety.

## **8 We maintain and improve our policies and practices**

- We are committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures, and practices to keep children and young people safe from abuse and neglect.
- We monitor our staff, volunteers, and external providers to ensure appropriate practice, behaviour and policies are followed.
- We require our staff and volunteers to disclose any convictions or criminal charges affecting their suitability to work with children.
- We verify WWCC clearances with the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian as required by law.
- We review our service delivery to identify and mitigate potential risks to children and young people.
- We annually review this Child Safeguarding Policy, Child Safe Practices and other processes to ensure we keep up with contemporary standards expected of sports and adhere to child safety laws, regulations and official guidelines. This review is conducted by the Director of Member and Child Protection.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE NSWFA

Safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility. Everyone associated with fencing must ensure they understand and accept their responsibilities for the protection of children and young people as set out in this Policy.

Entity	Role/Responsibility
<b>NSWFA Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop &amp; maintain appropriate and effective policies relating to children and young people's safety.</li><li>• Appoint a member of the Board as Director of Member and Child Protection with responsibility for oversight of the annual review of this Policy and its practical operation.</li><li>• Promote our commitment to safeguarding children and young people as set out in this Policy and as amended.</li><li>• Ensure all people engaged by NSWFA in staff roles are properly screened and have a valid WWCC clearance.</li><li>• Require that all coaches who attend the NSW Fencing Centre and any other venue controlled by NSWFA to practise as a coach are currently accredited by the AFF and have a valid WWCC clearance. This includes club, school and personal coaches who are not engaged by NSWFA.</li><li>• Ensure systems are in place to monitor that employees and volunteers comply with screening requirements.</li><li>• Develop processes to encourage the participation of children and young people in decisions affecting the sport via the Child Safe Liaison Group.</li><li>• Ensure people engaged by NSWFA understand their child protection responsibilities and have access to this policy and related attachments.</li><li>• Ensure that child abuse allegations against any relevant person or organisation are properly reported and handled according to the law, official standards/guidelines and this policy.</li><li>• Ensure that any sanction applied under this or other relevant policies is complied with and properly applied.</li></ul>

<b>NSWFA Officials, Coaches &amp; Volunteers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree in writing to comply with the NSWFA Code of Conduct and this Child Safeguarding Policy as a condition of appointment.</li> <li>• Comply with the NSW Working With Children Check requirements.</li> <li>• Maintain AFF accreditation as a fencing coach and comply with AFF requirements for the accreditation of coaches.</li> <li>• Assist in creating and maintaining a child safe culture and a culture of inclusion.</li> <li>• Undertake any required induction and on-going training relevant to safeguarding children and young people.</li> <li>• Seek guidance from the Director of Member and Child Protection if there is a lack of understanding or question about the commitments and expectations of this Policy.</li> <li>• Take appropriate action to protect children and young people from all forms of child abuse or other inappropriate behaviour.</li> <li>• Report any concerns or evidence about the safety of children and young people through the appropriate reporting channels.</li> </ul>
<b>Member Protection Information Officers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake Member Protection Information Officer training and certification as provided by Play By The Rules or other appropriate course provider.</li> <li>• Undertake any required induction and training relevant to safeguarding children and young people.</li> <li>• Be familiar with the types of child abuse that might occur within the sport and be alert for any indications of such conduct.</li> <li>• Provide advice and support to athletes, parents, volunteers and staff who may hold concerns about the safety of a child or young person, including advice and support to report concerns.</li> <li>• Contribute to the design and delivery of child protection training as appropriate.</li> <li>• Report any concerns about the safety of children and young people that come to their attention.</li> </ul>
<b>Volunteers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct and the Child Safeguarding Policy as a condition of volunteering.</li> <li>• Hold a current WWCC Volunteer clearance if required for their role.</li> <li>• Undertake any required induction and training relevant to safeguarding children and young people.</li> <li>• Be familiar with the types of child abuse that might occur within the sport and be alert for any indications of such conduct.</li> </ul>
<b>Affiliated Clubs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that all officials, coaches and volunteers who have contact with children and young people under 18 hold a valid Working With Children Check certificate.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider requiring officials, coaches and volunteers to sign the NSWFA Coach and Volunteer Child Safeguarding Agreement.</li> <li>• Appoint a qualified Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) who has undertaken and passed the Play By The Rules MPIO online course.</li> <li>• Ensure the club follows NSWFA policies on general safety and equipment standards.</li> </ul>
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## 5. WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

We will ensure that we comply with the NSW laws relating to working with children.

The Working With Children Check is administered by the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1988, the Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 and the Child Protection (Working With Children) Regulation 2013.

Under these laws the WWCC is a requirement for people who work or volunteer in ‘child related work’.

All coaches, team managers, and paid or volunteer officials who have contact with children and young people through their fencing activities must possess a current WWCC clearance and be able to produce it on request. Evidence of a valid WWCC clearance must be produced when coaches annually renew their accreditation with AFF.

In NSW, people who are paid for child-related work, including coaches who give individual and group lessons, must hold a WWCC (Employee) clearance which remains current for five years. WWCC (Volunteer) clearances are free but cannot be used for paid child related employment. Details of how to apply for a WWCC clearance as an employee or volunteer are available online at:

[www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/applicant/help-to-apply-renew-and-update](http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/applicant/help-to-apply-renew-and-update)

NSWFA and our affiliated clubs must ensure our employees and regular volunteers who have contact with children and young people have a WWCC clearance. Parents are not required to obtain a volunteer clearance unless they are volunteering in an official capacity and working with other people’s children or attend fencing camps or other overnight trips.

Officials, coaches and volunteers who work with children must produce a WWCC clearance on request from NSWFA, Affiliated Clubs and from parents.

Accredited coaches must verify that they have a current WWCC certificate via the AFF Portal.

If one of our employees or volunteers is charged or convicted with an offence against a child or loses their WWCC clearance, we must immediately be advised.

## **6. PROHIBITED CONDUCT**

A person or organisation bound by this Policy commits a breach of the Policy when:

(a) they engage in any of the following conduct against, or in relation to, a child or young person:

- Child Abuse;
- Grooming;
- Misconduct with a child or young person
- Requesting or inferring that the child or young person keep any communication secret from their parents, guardian, carer, or other Relevant Person such as a coach or administrator, or Relevant Organisation;
- Supplying alcohol, drugs (including tobacco) or medicines, except with the consent of the parent, guardian or carer of the child or young person, and under a valid prescription for that individual and at the prescribed dosage; or
- any act that would constitute Prohibited Conduct under the Member Protection Policy;

(b) they are aware of an allegation of Prohibited Conduct and fail to report this conduct as required by NSW laws and AFF/NSWFA policies.

## **7. REPORTING**

Anyone who suspects, on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is at risk of harm should report it to the Child Protection Helpline on phone 132 111, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Where an Alleged Breach requires Mandatory Reporting under the NSW Child Protection Legislation:

- (i) We must comply with, and procure compliance with, the requirements of Responding to Child Abuse Allegations set out below and
- (ii) Advice and/or clearance should be sought from the appropriate child protection agency before taking any further action.

## 7.1 RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

### **You must ACT.**

As a person involved in fencing you play a crucial role in protecting children and young people. You must follow the four actions set out below if and when you become aware of any child abuse or misconduct towards a child or young person.

### **Action 1 - Responding**

If a child or young person is at risk of **immediate harm** you must ensure their safety by:

- Calling 000 for medical and/or police assistance to respond to urgent health or safety concerns;
- Administering first aid, if required and you are qualified to do so;
- Identifying an appropriate contact person for any on-going liaison with the Police.

If there is no immediate harm go to Action 2 below.

### **Action 2 – Reporting**

If you suspect, on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is being abused and/or neglected, you must report it to the police and/or the Department of Communities and Justice Child Protection Helpline (132 111).

If the alleged child abuse is occurring in a NSWFA venue or affiliated club, it must be reported internally to a person in authority in NSWFA, who will report to the NSWFA Director of Member and Child Protection.

The Board must advise the AFF, the Office of the Children’s Guardian and Sport Integrity Australia

NB: A person in authority is:

A Member Protection Information Officer

The Director of Member and Child Protection

A Director of NSWFA

A Tournament Director (DT)

The NSWFA Head Coach

### **Action 3 – Contact**

Contact will be made by the Director of Member and Child Protection or, as appropriate, by a Member Protection Information Officer, with the police and/or the Department of Communities and Justice Child Protection Helpline (132 111) to determine the information that may be shared with parents/guardians, and who should lead this contact (i.e. police, Department of Communities and Justice or the NSWFA representative). This could include advice:

1. Not to contact the parents in circumstances where they are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or
2. To contact the parents and provide agreed information as soon as possible.

### **Action 4 - Support**

- Support should be provided to any child or young person who has experienced abuse.

- It is important that the person providing support to the child or young person does not attempt to provide support which is outside the scope of their role.
- Support should include maintaining a calm open manner when listening to any allegations and disclosures, while avoiding seeking detailed information or asking leading questions.
- This information needs to be well documented and shared with the NSWFA's designated contact.
- Further support for the child or young person, relevant adults and others involved may be required, including a referral to wellbeing or healthcare professionals and or the development of a safety plan.

The Child Safe Contacts in NSWFA are the Director, Member and Child Protection and the Member Protection Information Officers.

Director, Member and Child Protection - Jing Shang  
email [jing.shang@nswfencing.org.au](mailto:jing.shang@nswfencing.org.au)

Member Protection Information Officer – Jess Brooks & Arash Karpour  
email [childprotection@nswfencing.org.au](mailto:childprotection@nswfencing.org.au)

## 8. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This document will be reviewed annually in consultation with stakeholders.

The review process will be conducted by the Director of Member and Child Protection.

Circumstances that may trigger an early review or amendments include legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes or any other matters deemed appropriate by the Board. We retain records of each review undertaken. Such records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

## 9. DEFINITIONS

The definitions in this document are consistent with the National Integrity Framework administered by Sport Integrity Australia. They are:

**Abuse** means any type of abuse (including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and inappropriate use of power) that has caused, is causing or is likely to cause harm to the wellbeing of a child or young person, whether in person or as the result of a publication viewable by any other person by any means.

**A person in authority** means a person who is responsible for a fencing activity or program such as a Board member, Club employee, coach or volunteer undertaking a required role.

**AFF** means the Australian Fencing Federation as the recognised National Sporting Organisation for the sport of fencing.

**Child Protection Legislation** means NSW child protection legislation as amended from time to time.

**Bullying** means a person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally using words or actions, or the inappropriate use of power, against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing.

**Child and young person** means a person who is under the age of 18 years. A child is under the age of 16 years.

**Child Abuse** is the mistreatment of a child that:

- causes, is causing or is likely to cause any detrimental effect to a child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing; or
- does, or is likely to, endanger a child's physical or emotional health, development, or wellbeing

whether through a:

- single act, omission, or circumstance; or
- series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances, and includes:
  1. **Physical Abuse** – occurs when a person subjects a child to application of physical force, which may cause injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behaviour includes, but is not limited to:
    - (a) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking; and
    - (b) harmful training methods or over-training where there is the potential to result in physical damage to a child.
  2. **Emotional or Psychological Abuse** – occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection, or attention it needs for healthy emotional, psychological, and social development or is exposed to violence/abuse against other children or adults. In some circumstances this can constitute **ill-treatment**. Such abuse may involve:
    - (a) repeated rejection or threats to a child;
    - (b) constant criticism, teasing, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule, intentional exclusion, and rejection;
    - (c) bullying and harassment;

(d) harmful training methods or over-training where there is the potential to result in damage to a child's physical, intellectual, or emotional wellbeing and development.

3. **Sexual Abuse** occurs when an adult, or a young person in a position of authority such as in a coaching role involves a child or young person in any sexual activity or comes into sexual contact with a child or young person. A child under the age of 16 years cannot provide consent, therefore even if 'consent' is given, it still falls within the definition of sexual abuse.

Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority, or position over the child or young person for their own benefit. This can include:

- Sexualised behaviour with or towards a child or young person;
  - Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature;
  - Comments that express a desire to act in a sexual way;
  - Unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child or young person;
  - Sexual contact with a child or young person including kissing, touching genitals or breasts, oral sex, or intercourse. Some of this contact would also amount to a **sexual offence**.
  - Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse and occurs when children or young people are forced into or involved in sexual activities that are then unlawfully recorded or used to produce child sexual abuse material. Such material can be in the form of photographs or videos, whether published or circulated on the internet or social media. Encouraging a child or young person to view pornographic videos, websites, or images, or engaging a child or young person to participate in sexual conversations over social media or otherwise is also considered sexual exploitation.
4. **Neglect** is the persistent failure or deliberate failure or denial to meet a child or young person's basic needs. Child neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, medical attention, or supervision to the extent that the child or young person's health and development is or is likely to be harmed. Breaches of a person's duty of care towards a child could also constitute neglect. Types of neglect include physical, medical, emotional, and educational neglect, and abandonment.
  5. **Exposure to Family Violence** is any abusive behaviour used by a person in a relationship to gain and maintain control over their partner or ex-partner. It can include a broad range of behaviour that causes fear and physical and/or psychological harm. If a child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence, then they may be at risk of serious physical and/or psychological harm.

Neglect of a child and exposure to family violence are not primarily the responsibility of NSWFA, its clubs, staff and volunteers however if a member of the fencing community becomes aware of possible neglect or violence towards a child, they should report it.

**Child Safe Commitment** refers to the NSWFA's commitment to child safety in fencing as outlined in section 3.

**Child Safe Practices** refer to the child safety requirements and practices adopted and implemented by the NSWFA to help ensure the safety of children and young people participating in Fencing Activity as outlined in Annexure A.

**Grooming** refers to the process by which an adult establishes a trusting relationship with a child or young person and those associated with their care and wellbeing (such as parents) to create an environment in which sexual abuse can occur. Such behaviour may include persuading a child or young person that they have a special relationship, testing the boundaries with a child or young person, inappropriately extending the relationship outside the sport and inappropriate personal communication or the giving of personal gifts.

**Harassment** means any type of behaviour towards a person that they do not want and that is offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening and is reasonably likely to cause emotional and/or physical harm to the person who is the subject of the harassment.

**Mandatory Reporting** means the legislative requirement for specific people or groups of people to report to child protection authorities any risk of significant harm to children and young people.

**Misconduct with a Child** means any behaviour involving a child or young person that is objectively age inappropriate and/or places the child or young person at risk of harm.

**MPP** means the Member Protection Policy of the AFF.

**NSWFA** means the New South Wales Fencing Association, as the recognised State Sporting Organisation for the sport of fencing.

**Parent** means a child's natural parents, legal guardian or authorised carer.

**Person in authority** means, in the context of NSWFA and its affiliated clubs:

- The Director of Member and Child Protection
- Any NSWFA Board Director
- A Member Protection Information Officer
- A Tournament Director (DT)
- The NSWFA Head Coach
- The President/Secretary of an affiliated club

**Prohibited Conduct** means conduct in breach of section 6 of this Policy.

**Recruitment & Screening** means the child safety recruitment and screening requirements adopted and implemented by the NSWFA to help ensure the safety of children participating in Fencing by taking all reasonable steps to check that anyone engaged by NSWFA to work with children and young people is suitable for that role, as outlined in section 5.

**Sexual Misconduct** means:

- (a) Sexual Harassment, which is any unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour where a reasonable person would anticipate the possibility that the person being harassed would feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated; and
- (b) Sexual Offences, which include any criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency.

**Unlawful Discrimination** includes:

- (a) Direct Discrimination, when a person or group of people is treated less favourably or differently than another person or group, because of a personal characteristic; and
- (b) Indirect Discrimination, when an unreasonable rule or policy applies to everyone but has the effect of disadvantaging some people because of a personal characteristic they share, where such personal characteristic is protected by applicable anti-discrimination legislation.

**Victimisation** means subjecting a person, or threatening to subject a person, to any unfair treatment because the person has made, or intends to pursue their right to make, a complaint or lawful disclosure, including under applicable legislation or this Policy, or for supporting another person to take such action.

**Vilification** means a public act, conduct or behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of, a person or group of people because of a particular characteristic they hold, as covered by applicable legislation, including their ethnic origin, religion, gender or sexual preference

**WWCC** means the NSW 'Working with Children Check' – see section 5.



## ANNEXURE A

### CHILD SAFE PRACTICES – EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOUR BY OFFICIALS, COACHES, VOLUNTEERS AND OTHERS

NSWFA Child Safe Practices have been developed to model good practice and to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to the children and young people in our sport.

A breach of the Child Safe Practices is a breach of the Child Safeguarding Policy and will be managed under the appropriate procedures.

There may be exceptional situations where aspects of the Child Safe Practices do not apply, for example in an emergency it may be appropriate to physically restrain a child or young person. However, it is crucial that, where possible, people seek authorisation prior to taking action that does not comply with these practices or that they notify their organisation as soon possible after any incident in which these practices are not complied with.

#### **Sexual misconduct**

Under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between, with, or in the presence of children or young people participating in any Fencing forum, whether or not the young person is above the legal age of consent i.e. 16 years.

'Sexual behaviour' needs to be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- 'contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution; and
- 'non-contact behaviour', such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

#### ***Do***

- Avoid any consensual sexual relationship between a person in a position of authority such as a coach or official and a young person aged under 18 years. For example this could be a relationship between a 17 year old coach and a 15 year old athlete;
- Advise a person in a position of authority if you are aware of such a relationship;

#### ***Don't***

- Engage in sexual behaviour towards a child or young person under the age of 18 years or a person over whom you have authority e.g. coach/athlete;
- Undress in front of or expose yourself to a child or young person;
- Flirt with or engage in sexualised conversations with children and young people, in person or through social media.

## **Maintain professional boundaries**

All persons should act within the scope of their role and responsibilities when working with children and young people who are involved in fencing.

### ***Do***

- Make it clear to the child or young person what your role is within NSWFA or your club and your professional relationship to them. You are a teacher or facilitator of fencing; you are not their friend or counsellor.
- Avoid touching a child or young person when demonstrating an activity. If you cannot demonstrate a technique without touching them, seek permission to do so and/or explain to them that you are going to touch them or adjust their technique with minimal contact. Avoid touching any intimate part of their body;
- Avoid contacting a child or young person directly by phone, text, email or other means. Instead, convey any message via their parents, guardians or teachers in the case of school fencers;
- If you become aware of a situation where the child or young person requires extra assistance such as counselling, contact their parents or refer them to an appropriate support or seek advice from an authorised person such as a Member Protection Information Officer.

### ***Don't***

- Undertake a role that is outside the scope of your role or is the responsibility of another person;
- Engage in massage/stretching of children or young people individually. You may conduct group warm-up, stretching exercises as part of your coaching role;
- Engage in horseplay with your students during or after training;
- Socialise with your students outside training including sharing meals after training or attending the child or young person's other activities;
- Offer child care services or tutoring to assist parents;
- Give personal gifts other than official awards;
- Transport children and young people unless you have written approval from their parents or guardians to do so for a fencing related purpose.

### **Use of language and tone of voice**

Language and tone of voice used in the presence of children and young people must be age appropriate and respectful.

#### ***Do***

- Provide clear direction, boost their confidence and encourage, them;
- Speak respectfully and professionally to them;
- Address situations where you witness negative language or tone and reinforce with other members or participants that it is not appropriate.

#### ***Don't***

- Use language that is discriminatory, racist, or sexist;
- Use language that is derogatory, belittling, or negative, for example, by calling a child or young person a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat';
- Use threatening, abusive or profane language;
- Engage in inappropriate conversations such as enquiring about a child or young person's sexual activity;
- Make jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature.

### **Positive guidance**

Children and young people participating in fencing will be made aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience for all participants. Coaches, officials and volunteers must use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure an effective and positive fencing environment; and to ensure the safety and/or wellbeing of children, and young people or personnel participating in sport.

#### ***Do***

- Use strategies that are fair, respectful, and appropriate to the developmental stage of the children and young people involved. For example, your expectations of, and interactions with an 11 year old beginner fencer should be different to those of a 16 year old highly competitive fencer.
- Provide clear directions and reinforce positive behaviour.

#### ***Don't***

- Take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

### **Supervision of children and young people**

Children and young people participating in fencing programs and services must always be supervised by an adult(s). Supervision must be constant, active, and diligent and requires the presence of responsible adults to always be able to observe each child or young person, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary.

#### ***Do***

- Avoid being alone with children and young people, as much as possible. In circumstances where you are training an individual child or young person, ensure your club or organisation is aware of the arrangement.
- Any one-to one unsupervised contact should be reported to management within your organisation as soon as possible.
- Ensure there is a responsible adult with children and young people at all times.

#### ***Don't***

- Allow a child or young person to leave with an adult or person in a position of authority without the prior permission of their parent or guardian
- Delegate supervisory responsibilities to another child or young person or a parent who is simply present with their own child
- Leave a child or young person alone at or outside a venue while waiting for a parent or guardian
- Leave older children or young people in charge of younger children while there are no responsible adults present

### **Use of, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs**

While responsible for the care of children, and young people:

#### ***Don't***

- use, possess or be under the influence of an illicit drug;
- use or be under the influence of alcohol;
- be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs;
- supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco);
- supply medicines, except with the consent of the parent, guardian, or carer of the child or young person and under a valid prescription for that individual and at the prescribed dosage.

### **Use of electronic or online communications**

Electronic or online communication sent to a child or young person by a coach or fencing official should relate only to fencing business and should preferably occur through their parent or guardian.

#### ***Do***

- Communicate through the parent rather than directly with the child or young person;
- Restrict communications to issues directly associated with fencing services or activities;
- Use group rather than individual messages;
- Use NSWFA sanctioned messaging – e.g. an @nswfencing email address, What's App and WeChat accounts;
- Advise the parent or guardian or a person in a position of authority in your organisation if a child or young person communicates with you outside your role and advise the child or young person the communication is not appropriate.

#### ***Don't***

- Communicate directly and solely with a child or young person unless it is really necessary – e.g. to advise of a late change to training times;
- Befriend a child or young person on social media;
- Send photos or videos directly to a child or young person without the prior permission of their parent;
- Upload images of children or young people without the permission of their parent;
- Ask a child or young person to keep your communications with them secret from their parent;
- Send communications late at night unless it is an urgent group advice such as cancellation of training at short notice;
- Engage in online sexual banter, jokes or innuendo with a child or young person.

## Photographs of Children and Young People

Children and young people are to be photographed or videoed while involved in our sport only if:

- the child's parent has provided prior written approval for the photographs to be taken or for the video footage to be captured. This may take the form of permission given upon registration for images to be used for the general promotion of fencing;
- the context is directly related to participation in our sport;
- the child or young person is appropriately dressed and posed; and
- the image is taken in the presence of other adults.

### **Do**

- Ask permission from the child or young person's parent before taking any photographs or videos (see above);
- Delete any photos as soon as they are no longer required;
- Ensure the context in which you are taking photos or videos is directly related to fencing activities;
- Preferably designate an official photographer for events.

### ***Don't***

- Distribute images to anyone outside fencing or for an unapproved reason;
- Publish a photo on social media without the prior approval of the child or young person's parent (see above);
- Forward or share images of children and young people for an unapproved reason;
- Keep fencing related photos of children and young people on your personal phone.

## Physical contact with Children and Young People

Any physical contact with children and young people must be appropriate to the delivery of fencing programs or services and based on the needs of the child or young person such as assisting with the use of equipment, technique, treatment by a health practitioner or administering first aid. Physical contact should not involve intimate parts of the body in any circumstances.

### Do

- Seek a child or young person's permission to touch them if you are demonstrating a technique and use minimal contact.
- Check that physical contact is acceptable to individual children and young people;
- If a child or young person shows signs of discomfort stop the physical contact;
- Try to use verbal directions rather than touch wherever possible;
- Gently discourage younger children from coming into physical contact with you e.g. wanting to hug you;
- Use non-intrusive gestures to comfort or congratulate a child or young person e.g. a pat on the upper back;
- Report any physical aggression by a child or young person to a person in authority.

### Don't

- Initiate or permit inappropriate physical contact with a child or young person such as wrestling, other forms of horseplay or massaging;
- Inflict any form of physical punishment;
- Engage in unnecessary physical contact such as assisting with changing when the child or young person does not require assistance;
- Use physical restraint except as a last resort which is appropriate to the circumstances and to prevent the child or young person doing harm to themselves or others.

## Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements

Overnight stays involving children and young people should only occur on official tours, camps, training workshops and competitions and with the authorisation of a person in authority and consent of parents or guardians.

NSWFA will appoint a Tour Manager who is responsible for ensuring the safety of children and young people in accordance with this Policy.

Adults attending overnight stays must be screened and have the required WWCC clearance i.e. employee or volunteer clearance.

Standards of conduct that must be observed by persons appointed to supervise an overnight stay include but are not limited to:

- Providing children and young people with privacy when bathing, toileting, and dressing;
- Observing appropriate dress standards when children and young people are present – such as no exposure to adult nudity;
- Not exposing children and young people to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the internet, or magazines;
- Not leaving children and young people under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as accommodation staff, or peers;
- Not involving sleeping arrangements that may compromise the safety of children and young people such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or an adult sleeping in the same bed as a child or young person;
- Helping children and young people to contact their parents, or another adult, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or distressed during the stay;
- Not consuming alcohol when supervising children and young people. Under the AFF's tour rules, any consumption of alcohol while on tour by athletes or their adult supervisors is not permitted.

#### ***Do***

- Ensure there are appropriate levels of supervision with a reasonable adult:child ratio that allows sufficient supervision in unforeseen circumstances such as care of a sick child while other fencers are competing/training;
- Ensure accommodation arrangements are gender and age appropriate;
- Keep parents informed and ensure they have been provided with sufficient details of the trip including arrival and departure times, destinations and venues;
- Ensure a risk assessment has been undertaken and plans are in place for emergencies.

#### ***Don't***

- Share rooms with children and young people. If an adult presence is required, there should always be more than one child or young person in the room with the adult;
- Be alone in a closed room with a child or young person;
- Consume alcohol in the presence of children and young people or while responsible for supervision.



## **Parent Involvement**

Clubs and organisations must ensure that a parent is involved in any significant decision, including the signing of any documentation in relation to their child's involvement in fencing.

### **Do**

- Conduct all training sessions in open locations and allow parents to watch their child or young person during training (if COVID-19 rules permit);
- Make parents aware of the standard of behaviour required when watching their child or young person during training. Parents displaying inappropriate conduct may be asked to leave but should not be denied access for an undetermined amount of time;
- Ensure you have a process for recording in writing parental approval for attendance at overnight stays, taking of photographs or any transport arrangements that may involve another responsible adult from the fencing community;
- Ensure parents have access to information about this Policy and other relevant policies and know how to make a complaint or raise a concern about any child safety matter including allegations of child abuse or inappropriate conduct.

### ***Don't***

- Discourage parents from attending training sessions (except where attendance is limited by Government rules – e.g. Covid-19 regulations);
- Conduct one-on-one training sessions in unsupervised locations.

### **Transporting Children and Young People**

Children and young people are only to be transported by persons other than their parents in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of fencing programs and services or to attend fencing events. Other than in an emergency, it is not acceptable for staff or volunteers to transport children or young people without prior written approval from their parent. Parents should receive information about the proposed journey.

#### ***Do***

- Tell the parent the route you will be taking and estimated time of arrival and advise them if you are running significantly late;
- If you regularly transport several children or young people, vary the order in which you drop them off if feasible so you are not always alone with the same person;
- Transport children and young people in a vehicle where the manufacturer stated capacity is adhered to and seatbelts and child restraints meet Australian Standards (AS/NZS1754).

#### ***Don't***

- Allow a child or young person to sit in the front seat, unless you have a full car. Children and young people should generally be in the back seat/s;
- Drive in any circumstances if you are impaired by alcohol or any other mind-altering substances or have a restricted driver's licence.

### **Drop off and Pick up of Children and Young People**

NSWFA and Affiliated Clubs must ensure children and young people and their parents know the time and location of training and matches, including start and finish times.

#### **Do**

- Arrive before scheduled practice or game times to ensure that children and young people are not left unattended;
- Have an accessible register of parent and guardian emergency contact numbers and be able to contact them by phone;
- Ensure you are aware of alternative pick up arrangements for children and young people and that the parent or guardian has provided consent to those arrangements;
- Ensure that if a parent or guardian is late, you make reasonable attempts to contact them. It is not your responsibility to transport children and young people home if their parent or guardian is late for pick up.

#### **Don't**

- Leave the training or match until all children and young people have been collected by their parents.

### **Change room arrangements**

Persons supervising change rooms need to ensure adequate supervision of children and young people in public change rooms, while respecting their right to privacy. Supervising adults must be the same gender as the children and young people who are changing and should avoid being alone with a child or young person in a change room.

#### ***Do***

- Knock or announce yourself before entering a change room;
- Try to have at least one other adult with you in a change room when you are with children and young people;
- Try to get changed in an individual closed cubicle

#### ***Don't***

- Undress in the presence of children and young people;
- Shower or change while you are actively supervising children and young people in the change room;
- Use phones, cameras and recording devices particularly while children and young people are getting dressed.