



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Why does NSWFA need to have a Child Safeguarding Policy?

Sporting organisations must have Child Safeguarding Policies and practices in place so that everyone understands their responsibilities towards children and young people under 18. In NSW we are required to comply with child safe standards. We have a duty of care to you when you participate in fencing activities and the Child Safeguarding framework helps us make sure we understand that duty of care. This is particularly important as about 80% of our fencers are under 18.

What sorts of behaviours towards children and young people are not OK?

Behaviours that harm or pose a risk to you are not OK. In the sporting context this may include:

- Acting towards you in a way that makes you feel singled out, humiliated or bullied such as ridiculing, constantly criticising, yelling at, teasing or ignoring you
- Giving preferential treatment to some fencers over others
- Getting too physically close to you and making you feel uncomfortable
- Unnecessarily touching you when demonstrating techniques, or using physical force
- Engaging in inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature
- Telling jokes of a sexual nature
- Touching you intimately or having any sort of sexual contact with you
- Socialising with you outside the fencing context including attending social events, having meals or drinks together
- Giving personal gifts that are not related to fencing awards
- Communicating with you directly or on social media about personal issues that are unrelated to fencing
- Sending you or asking you to send any intimate images of a sexual nature
- Over-training you e.g. training sessions that are unreasonably lengthy, too frequent or don't allow breaks for food and drink

None of these things should ever happen to you or to your friends. If they do, tell your parents or a Member Protection Information Officer or other Person in Authority.

What should I do if am concerned a coach, an adult volunteer or an older young person is behaving in a way that makes me or one of my friends feel uncomfortable?

Tell a responsible adult. Firstly, tell your parents. If they are not sure what to do, you or your parents can speak to a Member Protection Information Officer or other Person in Authority. You will not be in trouble but it is important that you tell someone who can do something about it.

Is it OK to talk to my coach on social media?

No, it is not OK. If your coach wants to contact you to discuss fencing matters, they should contact your parents first or at least contact you and your parents together. You should not be friends on social media with your coach unless they are a member of your family. Communication and messages should be about fencing. Your coach should not be sending you private messages or messages that are unrelated to fencing. However, it is OK for coaches to communicate with children and young people about fencing matters via group chats.

Is it OK for my coach to give me a lift to and from fencing training and activities?

No, it is not. Your parents should make arrangements for your transport to and from fencing activities if you are unable to get there or get home by yourself.

If your coach or another responsible adult needs to transport you because there is no-one else to do so for a particular event – they must have your parents' permission in writing. If your travel arrangements fall through, you are unable to contact your parents and you have no safe way of returning home, your coach or another responsible adult may transport you home but your parents must be advised as soon as possible.

My coach has invited me and my friend out for drinks and dinner after a tournament. Should we go?

No. Your coach should not be socialising with you in this way. It blurs the professional boundaries between the coach and you. Also, if you are aged under 18, you cannot drink alcohol.

However, if there is a group going out to dinner with coaches and other responsible adults present, then it may be OK. It depends on the circumstances. Talk with your friends and use your good sense. Make sure you stay together as a group and have transport available to get back to your accommodation at a reasonable hour.

A Person in Authority is:

A Member Protection Information Officer
A Director of the NSWFA
A Tournament Director (DT)
NSWFA Head Coach