

# **Water Polo Victoria**



**Water Polo**  
VICTORIA

## **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**

## **Purpose**

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers of the Water Polo Victoria and its clubs to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices Water Polo Victoria has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

## **Child Safety Mission Statement**

Water Polo Victoria is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and well-being of children and young people in our care. We seek to promote and protect the rights of all children in our care and prevent abuse from occurring by fostering a child safe culture. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and Water Polo Victoria has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The Clubs that provide Water Polo to children and young people will present environments and experiences that always consider and put measures in place to ensure the safety of children.

## **Application of this Policy**

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:

- Administrators
- Coaches
- Officials
- Participants
- Parents
- Spectators

All of the people to which this policy applies have a role and responsibility in relation to child protection. They must all:

- understand the indicators and risks of child abuse;
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children; and
- understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.

## **Child Abuse**

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child, and these are circumstances that the Clubs are committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

## **Children and Families' Rights to Safety and Participation**

Water Polo Victoria Clubs encourage children and their families to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children and families who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them. We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

## **Valuing Diversity**

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from LGBTI+ backgrounds and their families;
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation;
- seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds; and
- address all instances of racism with appropriate consequences

## **Recruiting staff and volunteers**

Water Polo Victoria Clubs take the following steps to ensure best-practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers:

- Interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers
- Require police checks and Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements and as part of the induction process for new staff or volunteers.
- Additionally, all third-party employers will be screened upon employment.

## **Supporting staff and volunteers**

Water Polo Victoria Clubs seek to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We support our staff and volunteers through ongoing training to develop their skills to protect all children from abuse. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers.

## **Reporting a child safety concern or complaint**

Water Polo Victoria has appointed CEO Simon Devine as Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children, and he can be contacted via email ([simon.devine@vicwaterpolo.com.au](mailto:simon.devine@vicwaterpolo.com.au)). All complaints will be taken seriously and responded to promptly. Water Polo Victoria and clubs will co-operate with law enforcement agencies as required. All Water Polo Victoria clubs have an appointed Child Safety Persons who can be contacted through the club (See Page 4 for Child Safety Reporting Process). Water Polo Victoria and clubs will use incident data to strive for continuous improvement of Child Safety processes.

## **Risk Management**

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach in preventing, identifying and mitigating the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children. Adults should also take caution when engaging with children in the online environment. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- travel;
- talking to children or managing online group chats such as Facebook or WhatsApp chats.
- physical contact when coaching or managing children;

**Reviewing this policy**

This policy will be reviewed every year and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers involved in Water Polo Victoria and Clubs.

# Child Safety Reporting Process

**Child is in immediate Danger**



**Call 000**

**A Child Safety Concern**  
May be made by a parent, child, staff member or volunteer.

- Disclosure of abuse or harm
- Allegation, Suspicion or Observation
- Breach of Code of Conduct
- Environmental Safety Issue

**Concern Communication**  
This concern is communicated to Child Safety Officer by face to face, verbal report, letter, email, phone call or meeting

**Abuse Allegations/Criminal**  
If there is reasonable grounds to believe a child is in need of protection from abuse. The Child Safety Officer is to notify the police ASAP as well as WPV CSO

**Non Criminal Interclub Child Safety Concern**  
Water Polo Victoria notified of the concern by reporting club and discusses it with the effected party

**Non Criminal Intraclub Child Safety Concern**  
Club discusses concern with effected party

**Police Matter**  
This now becomes a police matter and all members and clubs are to assist as required

**Gather Information**  
Water Polo Victoria investigates the complaint based on WPV current policies.

**Gather Information**  
Club advises WPV of the complaint and investigates the complaint.

**Outcome**  
Notify all relevant parties of the outcome, update policies if required. Implement Re-education of volunteers/players if required. CSO keeps a record of the matter.

**Outcome**  
Notify all relevant parties of the outcome (inc WPV), update policies if required. Implement Re-education of volunteers/players if required. CSO keeps a record of the matter.