



CHILD PROTECTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY

The Springwood & Districts Basketball Association (SDBA) acknowledges the importance of a child-safe organisation which is committed to protecting children from physical, sexual, emotional and psychological harm and from neglect.

This commitment extends beyond creating an environment that minimises risk or danger. It is about building an environment that is both child-safe and child-friendly. An environment in which children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

This commitment is embedded in the organisation's culture, reflected in its policies and procedures, and is understood and practiced at all levels. Through the implementation of strategies that assist in considerably minimising the incidence and working towards preventing any form of child abuse occurring, SDBA is taking a proactive role in relation to child protection and intervention.

SDBA has created this Child Protection and Intervention Policy and has also applied the following documents from the "**Play by the Rules**" website (www.playbytherules.net.au) to create an all-encompassing approach to the protection and prevention of child abuse:

- Guidelines for Working with Children
- Spectator Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy

Along with these, all staff, officials, members and volunteers are required to complete the Working with Children Check which will ensure a safe and transparent environment at SDBA.

SDBA has also created a communication/social media policy to enhance and support not only our child-safe strategies, but also provide guidelines for all members of the SDBA:

- Social Media Policy

These documents will together provide an excellent risk management tool for developing prevention strategies and for the effective management of child abuse issues within sport.

Information contained in this, and the aforementioned associated Policies create a framework and provide direction for staff, officials, coaches, volunteers, members and parents of children and young people involved in SDBA, and affiliated clubs. SDBA's new Policies will help to deliver a consistent approach to child abuse prevention at all levels throughout the club.

POLICY STATEMENT

Springwood & Districts Basketball Association:

- is committed to promoting kids' wellbeing and protecting them from harm
- believes every child and young person has the right to join a club confident that they will be supported and protected
- encourages all members to behave according to our club's ***Guidelines for Working with Children, Spectator Behaviour Policy*** and ***Social Media policy***
- requires that all parents, players, officials and administrators read and thoroughly familiarise themselves with the club's ***Guidelines for Working with Children, Spectator Behaviour Policy*** and ***Social Media Policy***. These are the guidelines by which all members are bound
- is always on the lookout for potential risks to the safety of our kids
- knows how to respond to and report behaviours that threaten or are harmful to children
- will take action in line with the club's policies to ensure the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is a priority and is maintained at all times during their participation in activities run by SDBA

DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT THE SDBA WILL ACTION

Child abuse takes a number of forms (from Play by the Rules)

Physical abuse

This is when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child (a person who is under eighteen [18] years of age).

Emotional abuse

This is the result of often repeated attacks on a child's self-worth, e.g. through bullying (including name calling), threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating a child thereby undermining his or her confidence and social competence over time.

Sexual abuse

This is any sexual act or threat imposed on a child.

Neglect

This is when a child is harmed or at risk through a failure to have their basic physical and emotional needs met.

OBJECTIVES

Through the development of this policy, the SDBA's objectives are to:

- 1. promote and adopt SDBA principles for child protection and intervention amongst staff, officials, coaches, volunteers, members and parents of children participating in SDBA's programs and competitions**

The SDBA Board and Child Protection Officer have a responsibility to ensure that the club has a current Member Protection Policy incorporating a Child-Safe Policy in line with current legislation derived from *The Office of the Children's Guardian*, which was established under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, and expanded in 2013 to encompass the protection of children by promoting and regulating quality, child safe organisations and services. Any code of conduct or member/official/staff/volunteer/ spectator behaviour policy must be freely available to all members.

2. ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure coaches, other staff, officials and volunteers are suitable to work with children

There are mandatory (legal) requirements for clubs to assess the suitability of members and staff who regularly work with children.

Screening processes must include a criminal history assessment - per the **Working with Children Check (WWCC)** - and other recruitment processes such as reference checks will also be undertaken.

3. all club staff, coaches, officials and volunteers receive ongoing training, support and development in relation to their responsibility when working with children

The club will follow-up on the training available for all who work with our young people. This involves providing coaching qualifications, mentoring and support, referee qualifications, mentoring and support, child-safe training, **Play by the Rules** online training where applicable and building awareness of all club policies and procedures. All volunteers will receive appropriate induction.

4. provide comprehensive guidelines to assist staff, officials, coaches and volunteers in relation to risk minimisation and reporting/notification procedures of all forms of child abuse

The club will keep copies of the policies and code of conduct pinned to a noticeboard, accessible on its website, distribute them at registration of new members, membership renewal, commencement of new season competition by email or a combination of these to ensure that all members are aware of how to access these documents.

5. promote a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people participating in activities which come under the umbrella of the SDBA

From the implementation of the strategies identified in the above objectives, the results for the club will be a safe and supportive environment for all children, young people and the wider community.

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

To deal appropriately with these issues and to ensure that the confidentiality of all parties involved is maintained, one person within SDBA will be designated as the child protection officer.

The child protection officer is responsible for:

- ensuring all staff/officials/members and volunteers of SDBA have completed the WWCC by the new required date of 01 April 2015
- reporting any allegations of child abuse that occur in SDBA to the local branch of the Department of Families & Community Services (DoCS), and the NSW Police Service.

If the Child Protection Officer is not available then the most senior person within SDBA should be notified.

*Child Protection Officer: contact the SDBA office for contact details.

EXPECTATIONS

Administrators, coaches, officials, members and volunteers often have a high level of contact with children in the sporting environment and play a major part in the successful operation of sporting activities.

Coaches and officials are often seen as role models. They have significant influence on the children they come into contact with and therefore have significant responsibilities.

SDBA expects that all administrators, coaches and officials whether paid or unpaid, who participate in organised sport under the banner of SDBA will commit to implementing risk management strategies developed by SDBA for child protection and intervention.

POLICY REVIEW

SDBA's Child Protection and Intervention Policy and associated behaviour and guidelines documents/policies will be reviewed annually and updated in line with any legislative changes that have impact on the way child protection and intervention issues are to be dealt with.

DEALING WITH CHILD ABUSE

Everyone in a recreation group or sporting club has a responsibility to care for and protect all children who participate in its activities.

- Report any form of abuse or behaviour that concerns you to the Child Protection Officer. Remember this includes verbal and emotional abuse or neglect.
- Be caring and understanding towards the child
- Show you believe what the child says even if you find the information uncomfortable
- Reassure the child that the abuse is not their fault
- Tell the child you are pleased they have shared this with you
- Verbal notification of the incident/alleged child abuse must be followed up in writing within 24 hours by the Child Protection Officer to the Child Protection Helpline/Department of Family and Community Services
- Reassure the child that the abuse is not their fault
- Tell the child you are pleased they have shared this with you
- If the behaviour is extreme and the Child Protection Officer or Club President are not readily available, then phone the **Child Protection Helpline: 132 111**.

You may remain anonymous.

INVESTIGATION

If an incident of child abuse occurs in SDBA it is not the responsibility of persons within SDBA to take it upon themselves to determine whether the allegation is true or false. This responsibility belongs with the NSW Department of Families & Community Services and the Judiciary.

Depending on the nature of the allegations and the extent of the situation, the NSW Department of Families & Community Service will determine the way the matter will be investigated. This may involve the NSW Police Service

CONFIDENTIALITY

All matters regarding allegations of child abuse are to be treated as confidential. The person designated as the child protection officer is the contact person for any incident involving allegations of child abuse. This is essential for confidentiality. Confidentiality protects all individuals involved:

- the alleged victim,
- the alleged offender, and
- the person making the notification

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

A Working With Children Check is a prerequisite for anyone in child-related work. It involves a national criminal history check and review of findings of workplace misconduct.

The result of a Working With Children Check is either a clearance to work with children for five years, or a bar against working with children. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring, and relevant new records may lead to the clearance being revoked.

The Check is fully portable which means it can be used for any paid or unpaid child-related work in NSW for as long as the worker remains cleared.