

Child Safe Environment Policy

Aim

The aim of this policy are to provide an environment that protects juniors.

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1 Background

Everyone involved within AUSC has a responsibility to care and protect any children (those under the age of 18 years of age) who participate.

The Children's Protection Act 1993 requires that organisations must:

- Develop policies and procedures to establish and maintain child safe environments;
- Lodge a "Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement" with the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD - Families SA); and
- Report a reasonable suspicion or incidences of abuse or neglect

The Children's Protection Act 1993 makes it a legal requirement for certain people to report a reasonable suspicion or incidences of abuse or neglect. This obligation is known as mandatory notification and a penalty may stem from an individual's failure to comply. Notifications must be made to Families SA Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78.

Reasonable grounds may include:

- A disclosure of abuse by a child;
- Professional judgement, based on the notifier's experience and observations; and/or
- Discourse by a child or an adult that a child is being abused or is at risk.

Mandated notifiers are an employer of, or volunteer in, a government or non-government organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children.

These people:

- Are engaged in the actual delivery of those services to children; or
- Hold a management position in the relevant organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children.

Staff and volunteers of AUSC, with junior members, fit these descriptions, and so have a legal obligation (are mandated) to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

AUSC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all young people and children participating in our activities. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

2 Revision

This policy is to be maintained and reviewed by the AUSC Committee.

3 Application

This policy applies to all members at all times.

4 Definitions

Member Protection Information Officers (MPIOs) play an important role as they are the persons responsible for providing information and options to an individual making a complaint or raising a concern, as well as giving support during the process.

The role of the **Child Safe Officer** is to deliver advice and awareness training within their club, having attained certain competencies. They can also be the first point of contact for members who have concerns about a child or young person within the organisation or group.

5 Supervision

Members under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. AUSC recommends a level of supervision adequate and relative to the members' age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience, nature of activity and nature of venue. If a member finds a member under the age of 18 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety until the parent/guardian or supervisor can be found.

Parents must arrive on time to collect their child for reasons of courtesy and safety at a location agreed to by AUSC. If it appears a member will be left alone at the end of AUSC activities with just one child, they need to ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

6 Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to/from AUSC activities (e.g. games), or making suitable arrangements with others (this could include allowing the child to transport themselves to training via bike, public transport or driving if they have a licence).

For those who are able to drive, AUSC understand that there is passenger and night driving restrictions (i.e. no passengers aged between 16 – 20 except immediate family allowed; and no driving between midnight and 5am) placed on those drivers who are under the age of 25 and have a P1 driver's licence. Exemptions are in place for those involved in sport and AUSC are able to provide documentation to support this fact if needed (For more information: <http://mylicence.sa.gov.au>).

7 Taking and using images of children

Images of children can be used inappropriately or illegally. AUSC requires that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used.

We also require the privacy of others to be respected and disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

AUSC will only use an image of a child in good faith. We will only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to the activity, and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the activity, displays its successes, etc. If AUSC uses an image of a child, we will avoid naming or identifying the child or wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname. We will not display personal information such as residential address, e-mail address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. We will not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc. as this information can be used as grooming tools by other persons.

8 Social Media

AUSC use social media tools, especially Facebook, as a means to communicate with members. Special considerations should be made when anyone under the age of 18 is involved, including:

- AUSC will not rely solely on social media to communicate key information to members to ensure that those who are not on social media are not excluded from any information. As per *AUSC Communications Policy*, e-mail will be AUSC's primary communication medium;
- All social media communication should be suitable in content and language for those using the page/group;
- Anti-bullying and harassment should be promoted and those involved in bullying behaviours should be counselled in line with relevant AUSC policies;
- AUSC recommends that, if an official club group is established for members who are juniors, that at least two senior members such as a coach, junior coordinator or Child Safe Officer, who have all met the club's screening process, be added as administrators to monitor the group. The adding of parents to the group is at the discretion of the administrators. If the focus of the group is to relay key information, parents should be added under clear guidelines. If it is a social/friendship group, then the adding of parents is not needed.

Refer *AUSC Social Media Policy* for further information.

9 Volunteer Selection and Training

AUSC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in prescribed positions).

This may be achieved using a range of screening measures such as criminal history checks, signed declarations, referee checks, and other relevant background checks. Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

10 Inductions and Code of Conduct

AUSC has a 'Code of Conduct' that includes standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with young people and children. AUSC also empowers and promotes the participation of young people in the decision-making process.

11 'Child safe officers' / 'Member protection officers'

AUSC currently do not have enough junior members to justify a child safe officer.

AU Sport SDOs will be first point of call for AUSC on child safe issues.

Should AUSC develop an official junior program, AUSC must / will appoint and support a club Child Safe Officer.

12 Report and respond appropriately to suspected abuse and neglect

AUSC will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

AUSC will make all volunteers and employees aware of their responsibilities under respective state laws if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

In addition to any legal obligation, if any person feels another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a young person or child; or is breaching the code(s) of practice set out, they may make an internal complaint. Please refer to our 'Complaints Handling Policy' to understand the steps involved. This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how the AUSC will deal with the problem.

13 References

AU Sport – *Child Safe Environment Policy*, 1/06/2015,
<http://www.theblacks.com.au/Common/Filer.ashx?FID=4429>.

Government of South Australia – *Child safe environments*, Department for Education and Child Development, accessed 10/10/2015,
<http://www.families.sa.gov.au/pages/protectingchildren/CSEHome/>.

14 Document control

Revision (Date)	Person	Comments
0 (13/10/2015)	Author: David Warren Reviewed: Committee (via Meeting 13/10/2015) Approved: David Warren	Document released to club membership.