

Saints



Macquarie Saints Baseball Club Inc

Child Protection Policies

July 2010

Executive Statement

The Club is committed to ensuring that the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children are maintained at all times during their participation in activities run by the Club. The Club aims to promote a safe environment for all children and to assist all staff, officials, coaches, members and volunteers to recognise child abuse and neglect and follow the appropriate notification procedures when reporting alleged abuse.

The issue of child abuse is a complex problem that has an impact on all areas of society, including participation in sport and recreation activities.

The Wood Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service, led to increased community awareness of the significant number of child sexual assaults and incidents of abuse which occur. It also highlighted the need for the development and implementation of strategies to protect children from abusive situations.

Protecting children from abuse is a responsibility that we must all undertake. Through the implementation of strategies that assist in preventing child abuse from occurring, the Club has taken a pro-active role in relation to child protection and intervention. These strategies will help to foster a safe and positive environment for children and young people to participate in physical activities.

In addition, development of Child Protection and Intervention Policy and Guidelines provides the Club with a risk management tool for developing prevention strategies and for the effective management of child abuse issues within sport.

Information contained in this document will create a framework and provide direction for staff, officials, coaches, volunteers, members and parents of children and young people involved in the Club.

Rationale

The focus of the policy and guidelines is the prevention of child abuse in the sporting environment.

This policy and guidelines promote the care and protection of children participating in the Club and provide information and direction for employees, official, coaches, volunteers and members of the organisation.

This policy and guidelines will assist the Club in establishing coordinated strategies for dealing with the problem of child abuse and neglect in a responsible, effective and consistent manner.

Objectives

Through the development of this policy the Club objectives are to:

- provide information to assist staff and volunteers in dealing with all forms of child abuse
- provide comprehensive guidelines relating to risk minimisation and reporting/ notification procedures
- provide direction to all staff and volunteers regarding their legal responsibilities under child protection legislation
- promote and adopt the Club's principles for child protection and intervention amongst staff, volunteers, coaches, members and parents of children participating in the organisation's programs and competitions.

Scope

The Club's Child Protection Intervention Policy is applicable to all management and staff (paid, voluntary, permanent or casual).

Implementation

In order to implement the child protection legislation the Club will undertake to:

- implement strategies and procedures that focus on the best interests of children and meet the requirements of child protection legislation

- promote a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people participating in activities which come under the umbrella of the Club
- increase awareness and emphasise the importance of child protection issues in a sporting environment to all those involved with the activities of the Club. This includes administrators, coaches, officials, athletes, parents and their children.
- ensure that all staff, officials and players of the Club are aware of their responsibilities arising from recent child protection legislation, in particular, the requirement under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998, to inform the Club if they have been convicted of a serious sex offence.

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.

The Club expects that all administrators, coaches and officials whether paid or unpaid, who participate in organised sport under the banner of the Club will commit to implementing risk management strategies developed by the Club (for example, the Coaches Code of Behaviour and the Players Code of Behaviour) for child protection and intervention.

Examples of strategies to minimise the risks of child abuse to be adopted by players and officials include:

- Displaying control and courtesy to all involved with the sport.
- Wherever practical, avoiding unaccompanied and unobserved one-on-one activity (when in a supervisory capacity or where a power imbalance will exist) with people under the age of 18 years.
- Adopting appropriate and responsible behaviour in all interactions.
- Ensuring decisions and actions contribute to a safe environment.
- Ensuring decisions and actions contribute to a harassment free environment.
- Not tolerating harmful or abusive behaviours.
- Placing the safety and welfare of the athletes above all else.
- Ensuring any physical contact with a person should be appropriate to the situation and necessary for the person's skill development.

Policy Review

The Club will review its policy annually and update it in line with any legislative changes that have significant impact on the manner in which child protection and intervention issues are to be dealt with.

Notification Procedures for Allegations of Child Abuse

The Club acknowledges that issues regarding child abuse and the reporting of allegations of child abuse is highly sensitive, and should be dealt with in a confidential manner.

The Club has developed these notification procedures to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the process and that consistent procedures for reporting are encouraged.

The Club will be proactive in its role to protect children and encourage an open environment that allows employees and members to be aware of their rights and responsibilities within the Organisation.

Child Protection Officer

To deal appropriately with these issues and to ensure that the confidentiality of all parties involved is maintained, one person within the Club will be designated as the Child Protection Officer.

The Child Protection Officer is responsible for reporting any allegations of child abuse that occur in the Club to the local branch of Community Services and the NSW Police Service. If the Child Protection Officer is not available then the most senior person within the Club should be notified.

Child Protection Officer:

Name:

Position:

Mobile:

Email:

What should be reported?

Some incidents may seem minor, however, they may in fact reveal more serious concerns of misconduct or a pattern of behaviour that requires further scrutiny. All people associated with the Club should be aware of

the indicators for child abuse and sexual abuse so that they may make an informed decision on what to report.

If you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child participating in any organised activities conducted by the Club is at risk report the matter to the Child Protection Officer.

Written Notification

Verbal notification of alleged child abuse to the Child Protection Officer must be followed up in writing within 24 hours. Within a further 24 hours the Child Protection Officer must notify Community Services using the child protection notification form provided by Community Services.

Investigation

If an incident of child abuse occurs within the Club it is not the responsibility of persons within the Club to take it upon themselves to determine whether the allegation is true or false. This responsibility belongs with Community Service and the Judiciary.

Depending on the nature of the allegations and the extent of the situation, Community Service will determine the manner in which 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.

Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998

Under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 the Club is required to:

- notify the Commission for Children and Young People of the name and other identifying details of any employee or official against whom relevant disciplinary proceedings have been completed by

the Club irrespective of the findings (except where the allegation has been proven to be vexatious, mischievous or false)

- provide details of child abuse allegations/ convictions against employees or officials to the Commission
- notify the Commission of any applicants for child-related employment rejected as a result of risks identified through the background check processes
- ensure that records of all information required to be submitted to the Commission for Children and Young People are retained by the Club.

Under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 the Club

- will not commence “employing” a person in a child-related position without first requiring them to sign the Applicant Declaration and Consent form (if paid) or the Volunteer/Student Declaration form (if unpaid).
- will not commence employing, or continue to employ, in child-related employment, a person that has been identified as a ‘prohibited person’.

Contact Details

Community Services helpline: 13 21 11

Police Assistance Line: 13 14 44