



Aberfeldie Jets Basketball Club

Statement of Commitment to Child Protection

1. Aberfeldie Jets Basketball Club (AJBC) is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, have fun, be happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our employees and volunteers.
2. We have zero tolerance towards child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously. We have both legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we will follow rigorously.
3. AJBC is committed to preventing child abuse, identifying risks early and reducing those risks.

AJBC and Children

4. AJBC runs a junior domestic basketball Club for both boys and girls at which players can join junior domestic basketball teams or our Junior Jets skills clinic.
5. AJBC also engages coaches and assistant coaches for its teams and skills clinic who are children.
6. Given the many ways in which children are involved with AJBC, the AJBC Committee has a responsibility to provide a safe and inclusive environment for children, and AJBC as a whole, takes this responsibility very seriously.

Purpose

7. The aims of this policy are:
 - a. to promote good practice,
 - b. provide children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of AJBC,
 - c. prevent abuse from occurring,
 - d. in the event that allegations of child abuse are raised, ensure that the allegations are properly addressed, and
 - e. allow employees and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Policy Statement

8. AJBC is committed to the following:
 - a. the safety and welfare of children,
 - b. all children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity should be able to participate in basketball in a fun and safe environment,
 - c. taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination, degrading treatment and child abuse in all forms and to respect children's rights, wishes and feelings,
 - d. appropriately managing all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or child abuse seriously and swiftly,
 - e. all AJBC employees and volunteers will be screened. Recruitment of personnel will be based on whether a person is suitable for the responsibility of working with children. All AJBC employees and volunteers will be provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures, and
 - f. working in partnership with parents and children is essential for the protection of children.

Promoting Good Practice

9. AJBC aims to provide children with the best possible experience and opportunities in basketball. All stakeholders of the AJBC must operate within an accepted ethical framework, including the AJBC Child safety Guidelines.
10. It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse. It is therefore NOT the responsibility of employees or participants in basketball to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place. It is, however, their responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and act if they have concerns about the welfare of the child.

Valuing diversity

11. We promote diversity and tolerance in the AJBC, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:
 - a. promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children, and
 - b. promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

12. AJBC will review existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe and child-friendly AJBC is, and to determine what additional strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children.

Promoting child safety

13. AJBC is committed to promoting a child safe culture and will provide opportunities for all members to contribute to AJBC policies and practices.
14. Child protection is a shared responsibility between AJBC, its employees and volunteers, all parents, coaches, spectators, and members of the AJBC community. Everyone that participates in AJBC activities is responsible for the care and protection of children, and reporting information relevant to child protection.

Training and Supervision

15. Training and education are important to ensure that everyone within AJBC understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.
16. Our organisational culture aims for all employees and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our employees and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse, to detect potential signs of child abuse and to handle allegations of child abuse appropriately.
17. We will provide our employees and volunteers with the appropriate training, supervision and support to protect children from abuse and promote a culture of child safety within the AJBC.

Child Welfare Officer

18. The AJBC has appointed a Child Welfare Office (AJBC Admin Officer).
19. The Child Welfare Officer is appointed so that there is a designated point of contact for matters of child safety. We expect our members and employees to discuss any concerns that they may have about the welfare of a child IMMEDIATELY with the nominated Child Welfare Officer. The Child Welfare Officer will ensure that the concerns/incident reported to him/her remain confidential and that the identity of the person reporting the concern/incident is not revealed.
20. Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this policy or a matter regarding child protection, contact childsaf@aberfeldiejets.com.au
21. The Child Welfare officer is required to report all incidents to the appropriate authority at Basketball Victoria.

Screening and Recruitment

22. AJBC will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. This is achieved using a range of screening measures.

Legislative Responsibilities

23. We take our legal responsibilities seriously, including:
- a) **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.¹
 - b) **Option to report:** if a person believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from any form of child abuse, they may disclose that information to the police or the appropriate government authority.
 - c) **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.²
 - d) Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.³

Regular Review

24. This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute and will take any feedback on board.

Allegations, Concerns and Complaints

25. AJBC takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our employees and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.
26. We work to ensure all children, families, employees and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.
27. We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above).

¹ A person will not commit this offence if they have a reasonable excuse for not disclosing the information, including a fear for their safety or where the information has already been disclosed.

Further information about the failure to disclose offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence>.

² Further information about the failure to protect offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence>.

³ Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

See the Department of Health and Human Services website for information about [how to make a report to child protection](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first) <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first>.

Definitions

Child: The words 'child' and 'children' in this guide refer to children and young people up to the age of 18 years.

Child abuse: Child abuse includes:

Physical abuse: Physical abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver subjects a child to physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or unintentionally, or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behaviour includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, kicking; giving a child alcohol or drugs; or training that exceeds the child's development or maturity);

Sexual abuse: occurs when adults or other children involve a child in any sexual activity. It includes both contact and non-contact behaviour, and when a child is encouraged or forced to watch or engage in a sexual activity, or any other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature.

Examples include sexual intercourse, masturbation, kissing or fondling, oral sex, making sexual comments, engaging children in sexual conversations in-person or via social media, voyeurism (i.e. observing a child in an action that is considered to be of a private nature, such as undressing in a change room), nudity (i.e. an abuser exposing themselves or the child) touching a child's genitals or breasts, encouraging a child to view pornography including child pornography or other inappropriate touching or conversations); and exploiting a child through prostitution.

Emotional or psychological abuse: occurs when a caregiver or parent repeatedly rejects or threatens a child. Often there is a pattern of emotional or psychological abuse, rather than a single incident. Such abuse may involve humiliating, terrorising, name-calling, belittlement, inappropriate symbolic acts, taunting, sarcasm, yelling, negative criticism, placing unrealistic expectations on a child or continual coldness from the caregiver or parent, to an extent that results in significant damage to the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.

Neglect: is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child with the basic necessities of life. (e.g. failing to give adequate food, clean water, adequate supervision, medical attention, shelter, clothing or to protect a child from danger or foreseeable risk of harm or injury).

Grooming: is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator builds a relationship with a child with a view to abuse them at some stage. Grooming does not necessarily involve any sexual activity or even discussion of sexual activity – for example, it may only involve establishing a relationship with the child, parent or carer (e.g. giving special attention, providing favours, and giving gifts) for the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time.