

Disability Sports Australia's Child Safety Commitment Statement

Disability Sports Australia (DSA) is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all Children/Young People who are involved in our sport. Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to Child safety and to establish Child safe culture and practices.

1. We will keep Children/Young People safe

(a) DSA have a **zero** tolerance for child abuse of any kind.

(a) Through our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, we document our clear commitment to keeping Children/Young People safe from harm, risk of harm, abuse and neglect.

(b) We communicate our commitment to all our staff and volunteers and give them access to a copy of our commitment statement.

2. We promote inclusion, respect and diversity

(a) We consider the needs of all Children/Young People. We use inclusive program design to support them to participate safely in our sport, particularly Children/Young People with increased vulnerabilities, such as:

- i. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Children/Young People;
- ii. Children/Young People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- iii. Children/Young People with disability;
- iv. Children/Young People living in out-of-home care,
- v. Children/Young People with diverse genders and/or sexualities.

(b) We recognise the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Children/Young People to be recognised for their gender identity, sexual orientation or intersex status, and to feel safe and respected when participating in our sport.

3. We create a culturally safe sporting environment

(a) We uphold the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children/Young People to:

- i. identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with pride and without fear of retribution or questioning;
- ii. express their Culture as they deem appropriate;
- iii. receive an education that strengthens their Culture and identity;
- iv. maintain connection to their land and Country;
- v. maintain their strong kinship ties and social obligations;
- vi. be taught their cultural heritage by their Elders and community;
- vii. receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner; and
- viii. be involved in services that are culturally respectful.

(b) We will take action to grow inclusiveness for all cultural identities and to establish equitable, respectful and empowering engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

4. Our staff and volunteers know the behaviour we expect

(a) We ensure that each person involved in our delivery of services to Children/Young People understands their role and the behaviour we expect in relation to keeping Children/Young People safe from abuse and neglect through the application of our Child/Young Person Safe Practices.

(b) We utilize clear position descriptions which clearly state relevant Child/Young Person safe practices

(c) We have Child/Young Person Safe Practices, which are approved and endorsed by the Disability Sports Australia Board and outlines our expectations for behaviour towards Children/Young People.

(d) Our staff and volunteers are given a copy of and have access to the Child/Young Person Safe Practices.

(e) Our staff and volunteers indicate, in writing, that they have read and are committed to the Child/Young Person Safe Practices.

5. We minimise the likelihood of appointing or accrediting a person who is unsuitable

- (a)** We have appropriate measures in place to minimise the likelihood that we will recruit staff or volunteers who are unsuitable to work/volunteer with Children/Young People.
- (b)** We will meet the requirements of the relevant state or territory Working with Children Check (WWCC) Regulations.

6. Induction and training are part of our commitment

- (a)** We will provide all new staff, volunteers, and participants with information about our commitment to Child/Young Person Safety including our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, Child/Young Person Safe Practices and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations.
- (b)** We support ongoing education and training for our staff and volunteers to ensure Child/Young Person safety information is provided and updated as required.
- (c)** We ensure that our staff and volunteers have up-to-date information relevant to specific legislation applying in the state or territory they are based in or where they may travel to as a part of their duties.
- (d)** Our Commitment Statement is published on the DSA website as well as communicated through other mediums such as our newsletters, annual report, induction or welcome packs..

7. We encourage the involvement of Children/Young People and their parents

- (a)** We involve and communicate with Children/Young People and their families in developing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment. We will provide information to Children/Young People and their parents/carers (such as brochures, posters, handbooks, and guidelines) about:
 - i. Our commitment to keeping Children/Young People safe and communicating their rights;
 - ii. The behaviour we expect of our staff and volunteers and of themselves;
 - iii. Our policy about responding to Child Abuse.
- (b)** We have processes for two-way communication with Children/Young People and families.
- (c)** We seek feedback from Children/Young People and have a process for responding.
- (d)** We empower Children and Young People.
- (e)** We respect diversity and seek to facilitate effective communication with, and empowerment and involvement of Children/Young People.

8. Our staff and volunteers understand their responsibility for reporting Child Abuse

(a) Our policy for responding to Child Abuse is approved and endorsed by the Disability Sports Australia Board and applies to all our staff and volunteers. DSA acknowledges that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Staff and volunteers must:

- i. Immediately report abuse or neglect and any concerns with policies, practices or the behaviour of staff and volunteers;
- ii. Meet any legislated mandatory or other jurisdictional reporting requirements;
- iii. Follow a specified process when reporting abuse or neglect.

(b) Our staff and volunteers are given a copy of and have access to the Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy and understand the implications of the policy for their role.

(c) We document any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding Child Abuse and take action and monitor responses to all allegations, disclosures, or concerns.

9. We maintain and improve our policies and practices

(a) We are committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures, and practices to keep Children/Young People safe from neglect and abuse.

(b) We have assigned responsibility for regularly maintaining and improving our policies and procedures to DSA's Audit and Risk sub-committee.

(c) We monitor our staff, volunteers, and external providers and take action to ensure appropriate practice, behaviour and policies are followed.

(d) We require our staff and volunteers to disclose guilty findings or charges affecting their suitability to work with Children/Young People. We review police records and WWCC checks regularly.

(e) We have formally reviewed our service delivery to identify and document potential risks to Children/Young People.

(f) We undertake formal reviews, at least annually, to identify and document potential risks to Children/Young People associated with our service delivery.

(g) DSA's designated child safety officer is Madeline Wood, who can deal with sensitive issues relating to child protection and safety. Madeline's contact is integrity@sports.org.au.

(h) DSA's National Integrity Framework policy, complaints Disputes and Discipline Policy is maintained and updated for reporting child abuse. This is the policy DSA will follow for child safety complaints.

Responsibilities

The DSA Board Governance Sub-Committee is tasked with developing and endorsing the Disability Sports Australia Child Safe Sport Commitment, as well as maintaining related policies.

The implementation of these policies is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), under the supervision of the Board Finance Audit and Risk Sub-Committee.

The specific roles of each entity in the development and compliance of the Child Safe Sport Commitment for Disability Sports Australia and its subcommittees and entities are outlined in the table below.

Entity	Role/Responsibility
Board / Sub Committees / CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the commitment to this policy and its expectations. Support policy review on an annual cycle as a minimum or at a time governed by legislation, regulations, or organisational learnings that promote a change to the policy and all relevant procedural guidelines. Ensure compliance to the policy via an inbuilt review mechanism. Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow for the development and effective implementation of this policy. Develop opportunities for regular discussion at all levels to support a culture of openness and continued improvement and accountability to child protection and member welfare. Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children and young people in support of this policy and its expectations. Advocate and promote the policy to all member organisations for them to endorse. Promote opportunities for member organisations to build capacity and policies through initiatives like the DSA CEO Forum.

<p>CEO/Managers or equivalent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their obligations in accordance with the Child Safe Sport Commitment and any relevant policy and procedural documentation. This includes induction, a minimum of one compulsory training session, and regular discussion and guidance at supervision and team meetings. • Ensure the suite of child safe policies is implemented and adhered to amongst relevant member stakeholders. • Ensure the development and implementation of required internal policy/work procedures and guidelines are in place to support child protection practice in accordance with the expectations of the Child Safe Sport Commitment. • Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow effective implementation of the suite of child safe policies. • Ensure to support staff and volunteers in a joint way with a decision to initiate any form of action to protect a child from abuse, neglect, grooming or exploitation.
<p>Staff and Volunteers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate supports, such as counselling and formal debriefing, are provided for any staff and volunteers involved in a matter relating to responding to a concern for the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person. • Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children and young people in support of this Statement. • Proactively share resources and experience in the development of child safe initiatives as they are identified. • Develop opportunities for regular discussion at all levels to support a culture of continuous improvement and accountability of child safe and member welfare. • Ensure that our staff and volunteers are aware of the appropriate recruitment, screening and employment practice in relation to individuals with specific roles in working, coaching or volunteering with children, their primary support person or caregiver and their families.

Staff and Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a full understanding of the commitments and expectations of this policy, as well as all other policy relevant child safety. • To undertake any induction and training anticipated in this policy, in relation to policy and procedures relevant to keeping children and young people safe. • To seek guidance from a supervisor or manager if there is ever any lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this policy. • To take action to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation. • To assist in creating and maintaining a child-safe culture and a culture of inclusion and safety
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Reference	Date Approved	Date Last Amended	Date of next review	Status
V1.0	25/06/2024	23/05/2024	23/05/2026 Responsible: CEO	Endorsed by: GM Approved by: Board