

# POLICY ON THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

## DEFINITIONS

A ‘child’ is a person under the age of 18. In some states and territories, a ‘child’ is someone under 12 or 16, and a ‘young person’ is someone over those ages but under 18.

‘Vulnerable persons’ are individuals 18 years and older who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against harm or exploitation because of age, illness, trauma or disability, or other reasons.

Unless specified, all references to ‘children’ in this policy also encompass young people and vulnerable people.

## MACCABI’S COMMITMENT

Maccabi is committed to striving to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children throughout our organisation, by implementing mechanisms that aim to protect the safety and wellbeing of all children accessing Maccabi services, events and activities (**Commitment**). Our Commitment is endorsed at the highest level and applies throughout all levels of our organisation.

In accordance with its Commitment, Maccabi:

- has developed this Policy. This policy provides clear guidelines to oppose any form of abuse against children;
- has adopted a procedure for the screening, recruitment and induction of individuals who are engaged in related work to undergo checks in accordance with relevant child protection legislation; and
- aims to train Maccabi Representatives to recognise signs of child abuse and to respond to allegations, suspicions and disclosures of abuse appropriately and in accordance with legislative requirements.

## REPORTING

**Every adult involved in Maccabi is responsible for reporting any disclosures or reasonable suspicions of child abuse.** The disclosure should be reported to:

- your local police station and/or the relevant child protection agency in your state; and
- your Club Member Protection Officer (**CMPO**) or, if you suspect your CMPO is involved, a member of your Club committee.

The relevant reporting hotlines for each state are:

<b>New South Wales</b>	Child Protection Helpline	132 111   TTY 1800 212 936
<b>Queensland</b>	Child Safety Services	South East: 1300 679 849   South West: 1300 683 390   Far North QLD: 1300 684 062   North QLD: 1300 706 147   North Coast: 1300 703 921   Brisbane: 1300 682 254

Central QLD: 1300 703 762  
After hours (all areas) | 1800 177 135

<b>Victoria</b>	Department of Human Services, Children, Youth and Families	Metropolitan   Eastern: 1300 360 391   Southern: 1300 655 795   North & West: 1300 664 977 Rural   Barwon S/West: 1800 075 99   Gippsland: 1800 020 202   Grampians: 1800 000 551   Hume: 1800 650 227   Loddon Mallee: 1800 675 598 All regions after hours   131 278
<b>Western Australia</b>	Department for Child Protection	(08) 9222 2555   1800 622 258 After hours   (08) 9223 1111   1800 199 008

## CHILD SAFE STANDARDS AND NATIONAL PRINCIPLES

As part of our Commitment, Maccabi acknowledges that policies and procedures alone are not enough to keep children safe and well. A child safe organisation is one that creates a culture, adopts strategies and takes action to promote child wellbeing and prevent harm to children.

As a result of the Betrayal of Trust Enquiry and the Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse, there are multiple standards that organisations must follow depending on where they operate. In Victoria, there are 11 mandated Child Safe Standards and in NSW, there are 10 mandated Child Safe Standards. These standards are based on and have been developed further from the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, which have been endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments. Maccabi has developed its policies based on these standards.

Information on the Victorian Child Safe Standards, including an outline of the standards, is available [here](#) and information on the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations is available [here](#). Please refer to Attachment A for the lists of standards.

## RECOGNITION OF DIVERSITY

Maccabi recognises that the children who participate in Maccabi activities and interact with Maccabi come from diverse backgrounds. We are equally committed to striving to protect the safety and wellbeing of all children, regardless of their individual circumstances. This includes children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (including those from Indigenous backgrounds), those who identify as LGBTQ+, those living with a disability, and those who are unable to live at home.

We encourage children of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights in a safe and welcomed manner. We recognise the strength and importance of culture and seek to nurture and celebrate it within Maccabi. Maccabi's approach to anti-discrimination is outlined in its Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy.

## EMPOWERING CHILDREN

Children should be informed of their rights, including relating to safety and wellbeing, information and participation.

When speaking with or in the presence of children, Maccabi encourages Maccabi Representatives and parents to use a tone of voice and language that boosts their confidence, encourages and affirms them. This approach aims to provide an open and safe environment that encourages children to speak up.

Language and tone of voice should not be harmful to children. Avoid language or references that is:

- derogatory, belittling, negative;
- intended to threaten, frighten or intimidate;
- discriminatory, sexist or racist or homophobic;
- profane (swearing); and/or
- sexual in nature.

## WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

'Child abuse' is the mistreatment of a child that:

- causes or is likely to cause any detrimental effects to a child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing; or
- endangers or is likely to endanger a child's physical or emotional health, development or wellbeing.

Child abuse may include:

- **Physical abuse:** any non-accidental injury (or a pattern of injuries) to a child by their parent, care-giver or another person. Behaviours include but are not limited to hitting and shaking.
- **Sexual abuse:** occurs when a person (whether a female or male adult or another child) with power or authority over a child uses a child for sexual gratification or pleasure. Sexual abuse includes a range of behaviour including sexual comments (verbal or written), exposing children to material of a sexual nature, sexual touching and other sexual acts.
- **Emotional abuse and psychological harm:** occurs when a parent, caregiver or other person with power damages the confidence or self-esteem of a child, resulting in serious emotional disturbance or psychological trauma. Often this is a pattern of abuse, rather than a single incident. Such abuse might include: threats, humiliation, taunting, sarcasm, yelling, negative criticism, name calling, ignoring or placing unrealistic expectations on a child. Emotional abuse also includes witnessing family violence.
- **Neglect:** occurs when a parent or caregiver fails to provide a child with basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes failure to provide food, water, shelter or clothing; failure to protect a child from danger or foreseeable risk of harm or injury; or failure to provide appropriate supervision or medical attention.
- **Grooming:** communication or conduct that is linked to facilitating the involvement of a child in future sexual behaviour with an adult. Grooming can be conducted in person or online. Many perpetrators of sexual offences against children purposely create relationships with victims, their families or carers in order to create a situation where abuse could occur.
- **Exposure to domestic violence:** occurs when children witness or experience the chronic domination, coercion, intimidation and victimisation of one person by another by physical, sexual, emotional or financial means within a domestic relationship.

## CHILD SAFE PRACTICES

This section aims to provide you with clear guidance on child safe practices. Children expect and deserve to be safe when participating in Maccabi-related activities. Acting in accordance with this policy will work to protect children.

On the other hand, if a person fails to act in accordance with this policy or other Maccabi policies, Maccabi will take this very seriously and may discipline and/or exclude that person.

## PHYSICAL CONTACT

Maccabi does not prohibit all physical contact between children and other Maccabi participants. Some physical contact may be required to train, coach or assist the child.

Any physical contact must be appropriate (e.g. to aid skill refinement) and based on the needs of the child. The coach should also ask if they can show the child proper technique first rather than surprising them with contact even though it may be appropriate in the circumstances.

Under no circumstances should any Maccabi Representative have contact with a child that:

- involves touching genitals, the breast area, or the buttocks, other if delivering medical or allied health services;
- would appear to a reasonable person to have a sexual or suggestive connotation or purpose;
- is intended to cause pain or distress to the child (e.g. physical discipline);
- is overly physical (e.g. wrestling, horseplay, tickling. Full frontal hugs should be avoided. If a child initiates a hug, a side hug is recommended);
- is unnecessary for the age, stage or physical needs of child (e.g. assisting with toileting when not required); or
- is initiated against the wishes of the child, except if contact is necessary to prevent injury to the child or another person, in which case:
  - physical restraint should be the last resort; and
  - the force used must be appropriate in the circumstances and aimed solely at preventing harm to the child or others.

## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Under no circumstances should any Maccabi Representative engage in any form of sexual behaviour with, or in the presence of, children.

'Sexual behaviour' encompasses all actions that might reasonably be seen to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- contact behaviour, such as kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution; and
- non-contact behaviour, such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

Any sexual behaviour that is a criminal offence will be dealt with and reported in the same manner as any other criminal offence.

If a child attempts to initiate sexual behaviour, even if they are over the age of consent in their jurisdiction, the Maccabi Representative must take responsibility for declining the approach, explaining the ethical basis for such actions.

## ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Maccabi Representatives should not 'friend', 'follow' or accept a friend request from a child via any social media platform.

Any communication between a Maccabi Representative and a child must:

- have their parent or guardian copied in or included in the chat;
- be for legitimate Maccabi purposes (e.g. coaching feedback or communication of training venues); and
- be professional, not secretive or suggestive and must not contain any sexual or inappropriate content.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Maccabi opposes the inappropriate or illegal capturing, or use of, images of children. Maccabi Representatives should be mindful of the images and videos taken of children, including by other people. If you see someone taking photos or videos of Maccabi participants with no clear reason (i.e. a stranger), it is important to follow up and ensure that they are deleted.

Maccabi Representatives may only photograph or video children if:

- the child's parent or guardian has provided prior written approval;
- the context is directly related to their participation in Maccabi activities;
- the child is appropriately dressed and posed; and
- the image is taken in the presence of other Maccabi personnel.

Images should not be published without guardian approval, unless the image is presented in a manner that de-identifies the child.

Further, Maccabi Representatives must not distribute images or videos to anyone outside Maccabi without parent or guardian approval, other than to the parent or guardian of the child.

Any external photographers engaged by Maccabi should have a valid WWCC (or state equivalent) and should be made aware of this policy.

## TRANSPORT

Other than in an emergency, Maccabi Representatives may only transport children:

- in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of Maccabi activities; and
- with the prior written approval of the parent or guardian (unless the representative is an immediate family member of the child).

Maccabi discourages Maccabi Representatives from being alone in a vehicle with a child. Another person (e.g. another Maccabi Representative or the driver's child) should always accompany the driver. A Maccabi Representative may only transport a child alone in an emergency (when all other options have been explored and a third person is not available). To the extent practicable, this travel should be notified in writing to the child's guardian and the club committee before the journey takes place.

The driver must drive according to road rules and must not be impaired by alcohol or other mind-altering substances.

## CHANGE ROOMS

Children should be supervised in change rooms whilst ensuring their right to privacy.

Broadly:

- at least two Maccabi Representatives of the same gender as the children should always be present and Maccabi Representatives should avoid one-to-one situations with a child;
- Maccabi Representatives should not shower or change at the same time as supervising groups of children;
- children who identify as transgender should be consulted on their preference of change rooms and their wishes respected;
- in a public change room, a Maccabi Representative should supervise to ensure that children are safe from abuse from other members of the public;
- Maccabi Representatives of one gender must not enter change rooms of the other gender; and
- phones, cameras and recording devices should not be used in change rooms, particularly while children are changing. Any images taken must be deleted immediately and counselling, disciplinary or legal action may be taken.

If a child requires physical support in order to get changed, Maccabi may require a support worker or family member to attend to assist.

## OVERNIGHT STAYS AND SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

Overnight stays must be approved in writing by the child's parent or guardian before the stay.

Maccabi Representative must comply with the Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy at all times while travelling. Maccabi Representatives should ensure the following:

- children have sleeping arrangements that do not compromise their safety and wellbeing. For example, each child has their own bed and there should not be unsupervised sleeping arrangements;
- children are not left unsupervised with unauthorised persons. For example, children should not be left unattended in accommodation venues;
- children are provided with privacy when bathing and dressing; and
- children share rooms with children of the same gender. Children who are transgender should be consulted on their choice of sleeping arrangements;
- children are provided with the contact details of the responsible Maccabi Representative, and in the case of Junior Carnival, their host parent/s;
- children have the right and a pre-arranged method to contact their parent or guardian during their stay; and
- if children express or report fear for their current or future safety or wellbeing, immediate steps are taken to remove them from the location and procedures according to this Policy are followed.

## ACCEPTABLE BOUNDARIES

Maccabi Representatives must limit contact with children to what is reasonably connected to Maccabi activities. Maccabi Representatives should not:

- contact a child outside of official Maccabi activities;
- meet alone with a child. If meeting with a child for coaching purposes, the child's guardian, an authorised adult or another Maccabi Representative must be present;

- engage external coaches or support personnel without prior endorsement from the Club's Committee;
- show favouritism to a child;
- provide services to a child or their family unrelated to the scope of their role if there is no pre-existing relationship (e.g. babysitting, coaching or tutoring). If a parent wants to engage a Maccabi Representative despite Maccabi's preferences, the parent or guardian is responsible for any check required and services provided. These arrangements are external to Maccabi and not Maccabi's responsibility;
- give gifts to children, except if the gift is given at a social function and the gift is part of social etiquette and does not signify special treatment and cannot be misinterpreted as for inappropriate purposes;
- attend a child's private social function except in exceptional circumstances such as significant milestone (e.g. an 18th birthday or Bar/Bat Mitzvah party) or if an adult relative of the child is a close friend of the Maccabi Representative. In these circumstances the following must be followed:
  - the invitation must be approved by the parent or guardian;
  - other adults must be present at the function and the Maccabi Representative must not be alone with the child or other children at any time; and
  - if the Maccabi Representative is a coach, the coach must inform their Club Committee that they want to attend the function and take on board any feedback regarding their attendance.