



SPORT INTEGRITY  
AUSTRALIA

Safeguarding  
in Sport

A photograph of two young girls running outdoors. The girl in the foreground is wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and has a race bib with the number 1410. The girl in the background is wearing a light green long-sleeved shirt and has a race bib with the number 110. They are both smiling and looking towards the right. The background shows a blurred cityscape under a clear sky.

# Creating safer sport for children and young people

How to apply the National Principles for  
Child Safe Organisations

MARCH 2025

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and future and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise the outstanding contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to sport in Australia and celebrate the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.



Artwork by Chern'ee Sutton

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# Introduction

Sport is pivotal for the physical, mental and social development of millions of Australian children and young people. This means everyone in sport has a responsibility to keep children and young people safe.

To help your club provide safer sporting opportunities and environments, this guide introduces you to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (the National Principles) and how they apply to sport.

There are 10 National Principles but think of them as connected parts that work together. By taking action on all 10 National Principles, your sporting club will be:

- Building safer and more positive environments for children and young people
- Minimising risks of abuse and harm to children and young people
- Enhancing a sporting culture that prioritises child safeguarding
- Setting a benchmark for your club's current child safeguarding capability, helping to guide your ongoing improvement.

The National Principles are endorsed by every state and territory. They were developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission, following recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

No matter where your sporting organisation is located in Australia or its size, the National Principles are relevant, consistent and applicable.

This guide provides some practical examples of actions your sporting club can take to embed the National Principles, but these examples are certainly not exhaustive. These are prompts for your club to adapt and build on.

Finally, there is no finish line when it comes to implementing the National Principles. You can continue applying these Principles over and over again for your club's ongoing improvement and growth. By doing so, you'll be taking positive steps towards safer sport for children and young people.

It's important to note some states and territories have legislated Child Safe Standards or similar safeguarding schemes that are mandatory and required for you to implement. The National Principles do not replace these, instead they provide overarching guidance for the development of child safe standards and policy. The good news is these schemes are based on the National Principles and so they align very closely. [Check out your local regulator](#) to identify any further obligations you may have.



# National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

## Principle 1

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

## Principle 3

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

## Principle 5

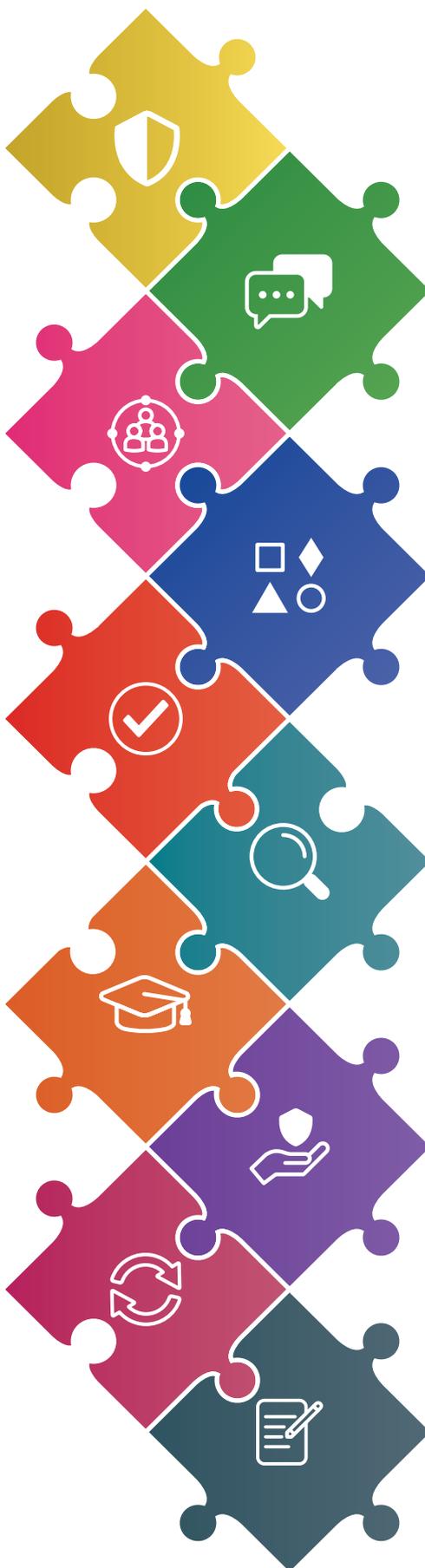
People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

## Principle 7

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

## Principle 9

Implementation of the National Child Safe Principles is regularly reviewed and improved.



## Principle 2

Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

## Principle 4

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

## Principle 6

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.

## Principle 8

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

## Principle 10

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.



# Principle 1

## Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.



### Goal

Our club leaders focus on child safety and everyone commits to it by what we say and do every day.



### Why this matters

Child safety is the most important focus of any child-related sport and leaders help set the standard. When leaders personally prioritise and champion child safety, it reflects throughout every level of a sporting community and greatly reduces risks of harm. By making child safety important in day-to-day practices and behaviours, it sends a clear and consistent message that everyone in your club needs to play a role in keeping children and young people safe.



### How our club can take action

#### Make a public commitment to child safety

Develop and promote your sport's Child Safe Commitment Statement. An example can be found in [Sport Integrity Australia's 'Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy'](#). Involve children and young people to help develop this. Create a version with child-friendly language to help them understand. Display it prominently on communication platforms, including your website, membership forms, social media channels, in staff recruitment ads etc.

#### Champion a child safe culture at every level

Everyone in sport is responsible for keeping children and young people safe. So, empower people in your sport to advocate by providing information and training on your child safe policy and practices. Extend this to board members, staff and volunteers, through to participants and their families.

#### Prioritise child safeguarding in your strategy

Set a Safeguarding Action Plan (see Appendix). Include timelines and people responsible for each action. Consider having a youth representative on your club's committee to help inform child safe practices and influence decision-making. Have child safety and wellbeing as a standing agenda item in club meetings, including annual general meetings.

#### Set clear child safety behaviours in your Code of Conduct

What leaders permit, leaders promote. It makes a big difference if leaders actively, consistently and transparently enforce child safe policies and procedures. Make your Code of Conduct easily visible and accessible to your sporting community at all times. Have staff and volunteers sign it during induction, and participants sign it as part of registration. Review your Code of Conduct annually with a child safeguarding lens.

## Develop risk management plans for child safety

Create a Child Safe Risk Register. This is a way to identify, prevent and minimise risks. Include children and young people by conducting surveys or forums, asking them about areas that may make them feel unsafe. Create contact lists for coaches and team managers with at least two guardians per child so there are contingency options.

## Support staff and volunteers to understand their child safe responsibilities

Provide staff and volunteers with induction training on child safe obligations, especially reporting and record-keeping. For example, if a child discloses an issue to their coach, the coach can respond in a safe manner, immediately follow the appropriate reporting protocols and keep appropriate records.

## What children and young people should be saying in our club

Adults at my club listen to me and value what I say.

I trust the adults at my club.

I feel safe at my club.

## What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - A Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
  - A Child Safe Commitment Statement
  - A Code of Conduct which has a focus on child safety and wellbeing
  - A Child Safe Risk Register
  - A Child Safe Reporting process.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.





## Principle 2

# Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.



### Goal

Children and young people at our club are told about their rights and feel safe because we involve them, listen to them and value their opinions.



### Why this matters

Don't overlook the valuable input of those you're trying to keep safe - children and young people. Children and young people feel safer when adults value them, listen to their concerns, involve them in decisions and take them seriously. When children and young people understand their rights and responsibilities, they can actively be part of creating a safer club environment. With the right information and support, children and young people can be more empowered to look out for themselves and each other.



### How our club can take action

Let children and young people know their rights and involve them in decisions that affect them

Create opportunities to seek input and feedback from children and young people. Develop and promote child-friendly, age-appropriate resources about children's rights and how to report if they feel unsafe. [Sport Integrity Australia has some safeguarding resources](#) you can access, including the '[How to involve children and young people in your sporting organisation](#)' booklet [PDF 2.0MB] and this [catalogue of age-appropriate resources](#) [PDF 4.7 MB]. Or you can create your own. These could be visible posters in communal areas such as the clubroom. It could also involve club leaders and coaches having group discussions with children and young people and telling them where to find support resources.

### Encourage the values of friendship and peer support

Celebrate the value of sport beyond the results. Regularly promote safe and fair play through your club's website, social media and newsletters. Include children and young people in the design of programs they participate in, like the activities, drills and skills they practice. Organise age-appropriate social events for children and young people, while ensuring supervision and consent from parents and carers.

### Support children and young people to recognise abuse, report it and seek help

Seek or develop resources that provide contacts for relevant support services for children and young people. Make these available on your website and club handbook. Display posters in your club's sporting facilities that remind children and young people of their right to feel safe and encourage them to speak up. Have a club forum/town halls/yarning circles with children and young people to provide an opportunity to tell young people of their right to feel safe and how to report if they feel unsafe.

## Take consistent action for all child safe breaches, however small

By showing your organisation's commitment to taking consistent action on all breaches, no matter how small, it shows children and young people that you are genuinely invested in their safety and are committed to taking them seriously. Reporting all breaches, even small ones, can sometimes help to reveal patterns of behaviour.



### What children and young people should be saying in our club

I know what to do if I feel unsafe.

I feel comfortable talking to adults at my club and I know they will listen.

I have friends I can talk to at my club.



### What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - Policies that empower children and young people and embed their rights
  - Posters and brochures that give information about support services for children and young people
  - Opportunities for children and young people to express their views and participate in decision-making such as an end-of-season survey, player committee, forums or event planning
  - Relevant documents and policies that are adapted to be age-appropriate, inclusive, and easy to understand for children and young people.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.





# Principle 3

## Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.



### Goal

Our club continuously engages in two-way communication with families and our sporting community to keep children and young people safe, healthy and happy.



### Why this matters

Clubs have a responsibility to keep parents and your sporting community informed about activities and decisions that impact their children. Engaging families also adds a valuable support network in keeping children and young people safer. By involving families and the sporting community in the development of your club's child safe policies, for example, it can empower them to uphold and contribute to your club's positive behaviours. The greater buy-in you have from families, the more welcome and engaged they feel, the more active role they are likely to play in helping to identify and prevent risks of child harm and abuse.



### How our club can take action

#### Involve families in decisions about their child

Provide regular opportunities for families and your club's community to give feedback and input on improving child safe practices. This could be in the form of a club survey, forum or annual general meeting. Use these opportunities to also measure the effectiveness of family and community engagement, identifying opportunities for improved communication.

#### Communicate with families about your child safe approach

Who are the best child safety contacts within your club and do people know how to contact them? Promote the contact details of positions such as your Child Safe Officer, Member Protection Information Officer and National Integrity Manager. Do this through your club membership welcome packs, newsletters, on your website, social media platforms and posters around club facilities. Make your child safe policies easily accessible on your website. Check how your club fares in the ['Parents/carers guide to selecting a safe sporting club'](#) [PDF 932 kB].

#### Invite families and your club community to have a say on your child safe policies and practices

It takes a whole community to protect children and young people. Seek input into policies and practices via online surveys, feedback forms or meet-and-greet sessions with your club's Child Safe Officer. Encourage families and others within your sporting community to all play their role in child safety, especially by speaking up if they see anything inappropriate.

## Be transparent when informing your sporting community about governance and operations

Communicate regularly with your community via newsletters and social media about operational decisions made by the committee, especially with reference to child safeguarding. Include ways for people to provide appropriate feedback.

## Welcome parents and carers to activities involving their child

Let parents know about their right to be present at training and competitions as part of child safe policies. Consider having a meeting with parents and carers at the start of a season to outline expectations and behaviour to create positive sporting environments and protocols for parental/carers feedback.



### What children and young people should be saying in our club

**My family is welcome and part of the club community.**

**My family knows what is happening at our club and who to speak to about things that involve me or concern them.**

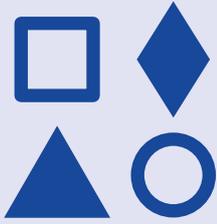
**I feel safer because my family is involved.**



### What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - A Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and complaint handling policies that include procedures for keeping families informed and involved
  - Post-season surveys and documented survey results that reflect the effectiveness of family and community engagement.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.





# Principle 4

## Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

 **Goal**  
All children and young people have the opportunity to participate in sport to their full potential.

 **Why this matters**  
Understanding the diverse needs of children and young people helps create a more welcoming, child-focused club that enables them to participate fully. An inclusive, safe environment reduces risks of issues such as discrimination, bullying and abuse. While all children and young people are vulnerable, some are more at risk and may find it harder to speak up about abuse. Respecting diversity, promoting equity and addressing barriers can encourage all children and young people to speak up, helping your safeguarding efforts.

 **How our club can take action**  
Help staff and volunteers understand and support the different needs of children and young people

Leaders should support staff and volunteers to feel confident working with diverse groups. Where possible, a club's leadership personnel, staff and volunteers should also reflect the diversity of the membership they serve. Demonstrate inclusive and respectful behaviour to all members, including children and young people. For example, offer cultural competency training, celebrate multicultural holidays that are represented in your membership and have training uniform options that support modesty and cultural beliefs.

### Identify and act upon any incidents of racism and discrimination

All matters regarding child safeguarding and discrimination in sport should be reported. If your sport is signed up to [the National Integrity Framework](#), you can receive assistance managing these complaints by [reporting them to Sport Integrity Australia](#).

### Give children and young people information, support and complaints processes they can easily understand

It's important any information you present to children and young people is age-appropriate, inclusive and easy for them to understand. It's especially important children and young people have access to relevant information on support services and complaints processes. Use [Sport Integrity Australia's catalogue of safeguarding support resources and information](#), or create your own. You can also make this information accessible to diverse groups and families, such as by consulting with members about more accessible and diverse formats. There are some [translated resources on the communities page of the Sport Integrity Australia website](#).

## Recognise, support and value the diversity of all children and young people

This should include, but is not limited to, children and young people who are First Nations, with a disability, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, or identify as LGBTQIA+. Aim to know your sporting community as best as you can, so seek information on diversity with an annual membership survey. Use this information to inform and upskill staff and volunteers, to identify potential barriers and to determine how your club will support the diversity of your membership. By making reasonable adjustments you can help your members feel valued, included and supported. This could lead to initiatives such as Welcome to Country performed at the start of each season, [participating in the Pride in Sport Index for clubs](#), reviewing the food served in your canteen.



### What children and young people should be saying in our club

I can be myself at my club.

I feel included and I'm treated fairly.

I feel proud of my culture and heritage.

I feel safe to discuss my differences.



### What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - A diversity and inclusion strategy that includes actions such as racial equity commitments and celebrating events that demonstrate diversity and inclusion e.g. supporting cultural and inclusive events important to your membership such as NAIDOC Week, Harmony Day, International Day of Persons with Disabilities
  - A Child Safe Plan that establishes culturally safe environments for First Nations children and young people. The National Office for Child Safety has 'Keeping our kids safe' resources which include guides on [cultural safety](#).
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.





## Principle 5

**People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.**



### Goal

We attract, select and continuously support staff and volunteers who will help foster child safety at our club.



### Why this matters

Effective recruitment, screening, training and ongoing performance reviews of staff and volunteers at your club are crucial to preventing harm and abuse against children and young people. By having robust, contemporary and visible recruitment policies that prioritise child safety, it helps you attract suitable people to your club and screen out the people who may be unsuitable. Selecting the right people also helps to promote your culture of child safety. Your club can take important steps towards protecting children and young people with things like induction training, appropriate supervision, performance reviews, record-keeping and information sharing.



### How our club can take action

#### Prioritise child safety and wellbeing in your recruitment

Recruitment is the front door to your club, so it's important you bring in the most suitable people. Involve the club's committee in a review of your club's recruitment processes, ensuring there's an emphasis on child safety. [Sport Integrity Australia has guidance on how to recruit and screen staff for child-related positions \[PDF 1 MB\]](#). When placing recruitment ads, include a statement about your club's commitment to upholding child safety. During interviews and reference checks, thoroughly test a candidate's suitability to work with children and young people.

#### Maintain up-to-date screening checks and ensure staff and volunteers are suitably qualified to work with children and young people

Working with Children Checks (and equivalent) are required in most states and territories, [so check for your relevant requirements \[PDF 273 kB\]](#). It's important to enforce these for all child-related roles and maintain updated records of staff and volunteers – conduct an annual review to ensure they remain valid and keep records. When conducting reference checks during recruitment, ask if they believe the person is suitable to work with children and young people or if there have ever been any concerns.

## Have an induction training plan that helps staff understand and commit to their responsibilities with children and young people

Use job descriptions to clearly set expectations for child safety. Induction training is another great opportunity to educate staff and volunteers about your club's value on keeping children and young people safe. Provide training on your organisation's Code of Conduct, any specific child safe policy and complaints processes. Induction training should also include record-keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations. [Sport Integrity Australia provides free eLearning courses](#) such as the 'Safeguarding Recruitment and Screening' course.

## Actively supervise and manage people with an ongoing focus on child safety and wellbeing

Ongoing supervision, vigilance and training continues to embed your club's child safe commitment and reduces the risk of harm to children and young people. Some ideas include: managing probationary periods for coaches, team managers and staff in a timely manner; holding briefings with staff and volunteers prior to events or travel to ensure everyone understands supervision protocols; having a two-deep supervision model, which ensures an adult is never alone with a child.

## Train staff and volunteers to identify signs of harm

Provide annual training for coaches, staff and volunteers. [Anyone can register for Sport Integrity Australia's free eLearning courses](#) such as 'Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport Induction'. Seek or develop resources that provide contacts for support services for staff and volunteers to access if there is a disclosure of sexual abuse.



### What children and young people should be saying in our club

**I feel safe around the adults in my club.**

**Coaches and officials tell us how we should behave, and the behaviours we should expect from them too.**

**Adults at my club show concern for me.**



### What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - Job advertisements stating the club's commitment to child safety and wellbeing
  - Child Safe recruitment practices, including questions about suitability to work with children and young people and formal screening processes
  - Induction documentation detailing training and expectations of all staff and volunteers.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.



# Principle 6

## Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.



### Goal

Children and young people at our club will speak up if they ever feel unsafe because they know they will always be listened to, taken seriously and supported.



### Why this matters

Children and young people are safer when complaints are addressed quickly, thoroughly, consistently and transparently, and where the family and community are supported. Creating a safe and trusted club environment means children and young people feel more comfortable speaking up. It also means adults know how to identify, respond appropriately and report suspected harm. Alternatively, if complaints, concerns or investigations are handled ineffectively, it can erode confidence and create an environment where harm and abuse goes undetected.



### How our club can take action

#### Embed a child-focused complaints policy

The complaints policy should outline the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers when dealing with different types of complaints, as well as their reporting obligations. Publish this on your club's website and in your club handbook so it is easily accessible. Assign and appropriately train a designated Child Safe Officer and/or Member Protection Information Officer to provide advice on options for complaints. Promote to your membership who this person is and how they can be contacted.

#### Help children, young people and their families understand your complaints process

Promote child-friendly information that guides children and young people on how to make a complaint if they feel unsafe. Use age-appropriate language and design for posters, club communications and social media. Conduct an annual club survey of children and young people to gauge if they know how to make a complaint, who to talk to, and how comfortable they feel raising concerns. Use this to inform new resources and training programs for children and young people.

#### Demonstrate that all complaints are treated seriously and consistently

While making sure your club's complaints processes are publicly available, ensure the individual complaints are treated confidentially. Keep children and young people, and their families, updated and informed on any complaints process they are involved in. Apply appropriate disciplinary action. Provide staff and volunteers with annual training on how to receive a complaint and the club's protocols.

## Educate people at your club on reporting obligations, including legal obligations

Document and circulate your club's complaints process so staff and volunteers know what the requirements are. [Sport Integrity Australia has a flowchart for reporting and responding to breaches of child safeguarding \[PDF 174 kB\]](#). Review your club's processes, including legal obligations, at least every two years. Complaints must be escalated to the appropriate government agency, with consideration given to the seriousness of the breach. For example, all allegations of criminal behaviour must be reported to police and/or the child protection services relevant to your state or territory. Note, some sports require clubs to also report all findings and data to their National Sporting Organisation.



### What children and young people should be saying in our club

I will not get in trouble for speaking up.

I know who to tell if someone asks me to do something I'm uncomfortable with.

When I speak up, the club deals with it properly to keep me safe.



### What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - A child safe reporting policy, including a version that is accessible to children and young people
  - A child safe Code of Conduct, including a version that is accessible to children and young people
  - Information on complaint handling that is accessible in print and online e.g. brochures, posters, the website and social media
  - Records of complaints and the processes.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.





# Principle 7

**Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.**



## Goal

Our club is continually learning and improving to make sport safer for children and young people.



## Why this matters

Understanding how children and young people are at risk of harm is essential to keeping them safe. Staff and volunteers can be frontline protectors of children and young people if they are supported with the appropriate education and training to recognise and respond to signs of harm. Extending child safe training throughout your club (from volunteers through to management and board members) reinforces the importance of child safety at every level of your club. It also helps everyone take responsibility for child safety.



## How our club can take action

**Train and support staff and volunteers to effectively implement your child safe policy**

Conduct training every year that includes a focus on the club's child safe policy. This is not just for new starters, but also refresher training for existing staff. [Sport Integrity Australia has free eLearning courses](#), including the 'Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport Induction' course which provides a good overview of how to recognise and respond to possible safeguarding breaches.

### Upskill staff and volunteers on how to recognise indicators of child harm

Staff can help prevent harm when they know how to identify it. Conduct training for staff and volunteers every year to focus on recognising the signs of child harm. You can help guide staff, coaches, volunteers and all members of your sporting community by circulating [Sport Integrity Australia's guide: 'Children and Young People Safe Practices Do's & Don'ts'](#).

### Upskill staff and volunteers on how to respond effectively to issues of child safety

Where possible, appoint a Child Safe Officer who can be responsible for auditing and planning training requirements. It is recommended that staff in direct child-related roles get more advanced training opportunities. For example, coaches, staff and volunteers involved with children and young people may undergo annual training to identify signs of harm and child sexual abuse, how to respond to a disclosure of abuse or harm, and the club's protocols around complaint processes and timelines.

## Provide training and information on how to build culturally-safe environments for children and young people

Provide cultural competency training and anti-racism training, such as the Australian Sport's Commission's online course '[Dealing with the moment – anti-racism in community sport](#)'. Regularly seek feedback from children and young people on how safe they feel but also look for gaps where they may feel unsafe. Note that children and young people's perceptions of safety may differ from the adults around them. Use these identified gaps to inform training requirements for coaches, staff and volunteers. Allow staff to engage in conferences and other forums to learn about improvements in child safe practices.



### What children and young people should be saying in our club

**Adults at my club look out for me and keep me safe.**

**Adults at my club recognise when I'm upset and help me.**

**My coaches and club staff care about me, not just the result.**



### What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - A training plan for volunteers and staff, including records of completions
  - Access to the free safeguarding training, webinars and resources available on the [Sport Integrity Australia website](#)
  - Easy-to-understand materials explaining types of abuse and what to do if it's identified.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.





# Principle 8

## Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.



### Goal

We consistently assess potential risks to children and young people in our club environments, including online, and we implement plans to protect them.



### Why this matters

Awareness of high-risk sport environments, including online activities, helps in your planning to keep children and young people safe. During the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the stories of more than 400 survivors in sport and recreation helped identify high-risk environments and factors in sport. Supervision responsibilities and lines-of-sight are critical to preventing and minimising risk of abuse and harm.



### How our club can take action

#### Assess and manage risks within your physical environments

Develop a risk management plan and update it annually. There should be timelines and a person responsible allocated to each action. Invite an expert in safeguarding (e.g. your sport's National Integrity Manager) to do an independent assessment of your club environment. Higher-risk areas such as change rooms, transport, boarding facilities and offsite locations need to be managed with specific safety measures. Sport Integrity Australia's ['Guide for managing high-risk activities' \[PDF 5.5 MB\]](#) will provide you with advice.

#### Monitor and enforce that everyone within the club conducts all online communication responsibly

Make it clear that no adult should ever engage one-on-one with a child or young person online. Develop and continually review your club's social media policy so members know how to appropriately engage on the club's digital platforms. Give children and young people information about online safety and advise staff on their responsibilities. Sport Integrity Australia has a specific resource to guide appropriate online communication: ['Communicating online or electronically with children and young people in sport' \[PDF 1.2 MB\]](#). For more advice, check out other resources like the [esafety Commissioner's sports hub](#).

#### Develop risk management plans that consider child safety for settings, events and activities

Circulate these risk management plans to staff, volunteers and contractors so they are aware of risks and know the actions to minimise them. [Sport Integrity Australia has safeguarding resources](#) that cover planning for things like events, overnight travel and accommodation considerations for children and young people.

## Engage partners that understand and align with your club's commitment to protecting children and young people

While your club can outsource goods and services, it's important to understand the safety of children and young people in your club ultimately remains with you. Therefore, it is important that contracts with all third-party suppliers and contractors reflect your child safe approach and values. When working with you, these parties are effectively representing your club.



### What children and young people should be saying in our club

My club is a safe place to be.

I can talk to someone I trust if I see something inappropriate in my club.

I know there are rules for the children and adults in my club when online.

I know what to do if I don't feel safe online.



### What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - A section in the Safeguarding of Children and Young People Policy that focuses on how the club will keep children and young people safe in physical environments
  - Guidance on the proper use of digital communication, helping children and young people stay safer online
  - A Child Safe Risk Management Plan.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.





# Principle 9

## Implementation of the National Child Safe Principles is regularly reviewed and improved.



### Goal

Our club continues building safer sporting environments for children and young people, and we are getting better all the time.



### Why this matters

Being a child safe club requires ongoing effort. Regular reviews ensure staff and volunteers follow policies and procedures. Learning from complaints and mistakes means you can continuously improve child safety. Involving staff, volunteers, children, young people, families, and community members strengthens child safeguarding. It's important to report findings and share good practices. These reviews help address new challenges and concerns.



### How our club can take action

#### Regularly review, evaluate and improve your child safe practices

Appoint a sub-committee – including children and young people as representatives – to regularly review your Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, as well as all relevant procedures. Task the club committee with conducting regular risk assessments focused on child safety. Publish the findings, for example in the Annual Report, to let everyone in your sporting community know how you are addressing child safety.

#### Analyse complaints, concerns and safety incidents to identify possible gaps and areas for improvement

Have a process that follows any complaint or concern raised/reported. This includes a review of all the relevant systems to see if it could have been handled better. Review complaint processes following an incident to check if there has been a gap in the procedure. Review and analyse all complaints to identify trends and risks that can be used to guide changes and initiatives. A review after an incident helps address any gaps in policy or process.

#### Be transparent by reporting findings of any relevant reviews to staff, volunteers and your sporting community

These can also be proactive reviews to improve your processes. For example, conduct an annual survey of members and families including children and young people. Include child safety as part of the survey and share results with members, inviting feedback to improve practices at the club.



## What children and young people should be saying in our club

People at my club ask for my opinion on how to make the club better.

My family gets a say in improving the way things are run in the club.

I see my club makes positive changes to make us safer.



## What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should:
  - Regularly review all your policies, including your child safe risk management plan
  - Take the opportunity to review complaints/incidents to improve your processes.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.





# Principle 10

## Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.



### Goal

Our club documents our child safe practices and, importantly, we deliver on them.



### Why this matters

It takes more than good intentions to protect children and young people in sport. If policies and procedures are missing, out-of-date, inaccessible, not understood or not followed, then children and young people will be at greater risk of harm. It's essential to have clear child safety policies and processes that are championed by leaders and understood by everyone in the sporting community. This helps staff, volunteers, parents and children and young people join the collective effort to keep sport safe.



### How our club can take action

#### Address all National Child Safe Principles in your policies and procedures

Review your policies with a child safeguarding lens, including your child safeguarding policy, member protection policy, complaints and reporting policy, risk management, social media policy and others. If your sport is signed up to the National Integrity Framework, Sport Integrity Australia will coordinate the review of relevant policies. These policies should also be made available in a format suitable for children and young people to access and understand.

#### Document all policies and procedures, ensuring they are easily understood

Your club could reinforce this by having annual training so staff and volunteers know where to locate the policies, how to understand them, and their role in implementing them. These policies should be up-to-date and accessible at all times on the club website or in your club handbook.

#### Consult with stakeholders to inform best practice for policies and procedures

You don't have to do it all alone. You will get better results by consulting with your governing bodies, regulators, members and community to develop your policies and procedures. Seek feedback and input from children and young people and their families.

#### Leaders champion and role model child safety

Leaders can strongly influence a club's child safe culture by how they promote and abide by policies and procedures. As part of this, leaders should monitor whether people within the club understand and use the policies. Leaders should also take appropriate action when breaches are detected.

## Empower staff and volunteers to champion child safety

If policies and procedures are understood by all, then staff and volunteers are more empowered to be upstanders not bystanders. That means more people are supported and confident to speak out if something is not right. Don't forget to use positive reinforcement too. Share stories and examples of child safeguarding successes at your club via your social media or newsletters, so you promote what good looks like.



### What children and young people should be saying in our club

**My club has rules that keep us safe.**

**I know where to find the rules at my club.**

**I understand my club's rules, and I follow them.**



### What this looks like at our club

- How is your club applying this Principle now? Talk about what you can do next, who needs to be involved, and who will be responsible for these actions. Apply this to your Child Safeguarding Action Plan (Appendix).
- Your club should have:
  - A Safeguarding Action Plan that is consulted regularly and reviewed annually. Refer to Appendix for a template
  - A policy/constitution that makes it clear that appropriate action will be taken where breaches of the policy occur.
- Remember to check your compliance requirements, including with your state or territory government and peak bodies.



# Appendix – Child safeguarding action plan

**Principle 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 2: Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 3: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 5: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 6: Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 7: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 9: Implementation of the National Child Safe Principles is regularly reviewed and improved.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date

**Principle 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.**

Action/s	Person Responsible	Due Date



## Safeguarding in Sport

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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