

PINE AGILITY DOG SPORTS CLUB INC

(P A D S)

CHILD PROTECTION

Risk Management Policy

2007

Table of Contents

Child Protection Risk Management Strategy Checklist	3
Child Protection Policy Statement	4
Receiving and Reporting Disclosures of Harm	5
Appendix	8
Appendix A – Queensland Child Protection Requirements	9
Appendix B – Code of Conduct	11
Appendix C – Incident Report Form	14
Appendix D – Child Protection Risk Management Plan	15
Appendix E – Blue Card Register	16
Appendix F – Recommended Guidelines : Instructors and Committee Members	17
Parents	18
Drop off and pick up or participants by parents/guardians	19
Transport of Players/Participants	20
Overnight Trips	21
The use of images of children	22

PADS Child Protection Risk Management Strategy Checklist

Elements of a Risk Management Strategy for child protection	Does this already exist?			
	If yes, no further action required (list the location of this information, or any required amendments)		If No, what is the Action plan to complete requirements	
	Yes	Location (e.g. in season handbook)	No	Action
A statement about the commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm				
A code of conduct for interacting with children and young people				
Procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and management persons engaged or proposed to be engaged by the operator, as the procedures relate to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm.				
Policies and procedures for handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines				
A plan for managing breaches of the risk management strategy				
Policies and procedures for compliance with blue card legislation				
Risk Management plans for high risk activities and				
Strategies for communication and support including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - written information for parents and persons engaged by the operator that includes details of the operators risk management strategy or where the strategy can be assessed; and - training materials for persons engaged by the operator to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> help identify risks of harm and how to handle disclosures outline the operations risk management strategy 				

PADS' Child Protection Policy Statement

Policy Title	Child Protection Policy
Policy	<p>We are committed to providing a child and youth safe environment within which our young participants can enjoy the sport of dog agility.</p> <p>We acknowledge that our staff and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of our young participant's. We aim to ensure this continues and to protect the safety and welfare of our young participant's. Several measures will be used to achieve this;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prohibiting any form of abuse against children; ▪ Carefully selecting and screening people whose role requires them to have regular contact with children. [screening procedures as per state legislation are outlined in the appendix] ▪ Ensuring that our code of conduct is promoted, enforced and reviewed. ▪ Providing procedures for raising concerns or complaints; and ▪ Providing education and or information to those involved in our sport on child abuse and child protection. <p>We require that any child who is abused or anyone that reasonably suspects that a child has been or is being abused by someone within our sport, to report it immediately to the police or relevant government agency and the clubs nominated contact.</p> <p>All allegations of child abuse will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. A person will not be victimized for reporting an allegation of child abuse and the privacy of all persons concerned will be respected.</p> <p>If anyone bound by this policy reasonably suspects that a child is being abused by his or her parent/s, they are advised to contact the relevant government department.</p>
Policy Objective and Rationale	The purpose of these procedures is to provide guidelines to effectively manage a child safe environment for young participants.
Responsibilities	It is the responsibility of the person or persons carrying out the task to ensure that the correct procedures are employed. The overall responsibility rests with the management of this club.
Impacted Parties	<p>This policy applied to the following, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individuals sitting on committees and sub committees; ▪ Employees and volunteers; ▪ Support personnel (e.g. managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs, sport trainers); ▪ Instructors; ▪ Handlers; ▪ Judges and other officials; ▪ Members, including life members; ▪ ADAA Members who are not members of PADS; ▪ Parents, Guardians, spectators, invitees and sponsors to the full extent that is possible.

This policy document will remain active with annual reviews undertaken to ensure its relevance.

_____ President

_____ Date

_____ Review Date

Receiving and Reporting Disclosures of Harm

An allegation of child abuse is a very serious matter and must be handled with a high degree of sensitivity. The initial response to a complaint that a child has been allegedly abused should be immediate if the incident/s are serious or criminal in nature then the

The following is a basic outline of the key processes to follow. More information can be obtained from the Queensland Government Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.

Suspicion of Harm

You have reasonable grounds to suspect harm if;

- A child or young person tells you they have been harmed
- Someone else, for example another child, parent, or staff member tells you that harm has occurred or is likely to occur.
- A child or young person tell you they know someone who has been harmed (it is possible that they are referring to themselves)
- You are concerned at significant changes in the behavior of a child or young person, or the presence of new unexplained and suspicious injuries, or
- You see the harm happening

Disclosures may sound like:

- "I think I saw..."
- "Someone told me that..."
- "Just think you should know"
- "I'm not sure what I want you to do, but..."

Any disclosure of harm is important and must be acted upon, regardless of whether:

- The harm to the child or young person has been caused by a person within or outside PADS, or
- The child or young person disclosing the harm to you is from within or outside your PADS

Irrespective of the source of harm, i.e. whether from within PADS (internal) or outside PADS (external), a disclosure may be made to the Member Protection Officer or if one has not been appointed the President of PADS as from time to time elected or if not available or appropriate another member of the Management Committee as from time to time elected.

What to do when a disclosure is made

Step 1 – Receiving a disclosure

There is not one set of rules to follow when a child or young person tells you that harm has occurred to them, or another person discloses an incident of harm to a child or young person. However the following actions may be of assistance:

- **Don't Panic** – you may be the first person to whom the disclosure is made. Your reaction may determine whether the person making the disclosure trusts you with the information.
- **Find a private place to talk** – privacy may help the person making the disclosure feel more comfortable and less concerned about telling you what they have to say.
- **Listen** – when presented with a disclosure of harm, don't say "I won't tell", and don't promise to keep secrets. You should reassure the person they have done the right thing in telling and explain that you need to tell someone else who can help them and finally reassure them you will only tell someone who will make them safe.
- **Believe the person** – it is not up to you to judge whether a child, young person or anyone else is telling the truth – always act on the basis that what you have been told is the truth.
- **Don't ask leading questions** – these are questions that tend to suggest an answer.

The person receiving the complaint should obtain and clarify basic details (if possible) such as:

- Child's name, age and address;
- Dates
- Times
- Location
- Who was present

Include a detailed description of:

- Exactly what was said, using "I said," "they said," statements
- The questions you asked
- Any comments you made, and
- Your actions following the disclosure.

If you are taking notes as the disclosure is occurring, explain why you are doing this and why it is important, i.e. to ensure an accurate record for any subsequent investigation. If the disclosure is being made by a child or young person, remember to explain this to them in a way that is appropriate for their age and understanding.

Any reports or documents of harm must be kept confidential and secure.

Step 2 – Reporting a disclosure

Suspicious of harm which may involve a serious offence against a child or young person must be always taken seriously.

PADS first responsibility is to report it either to the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Child Safety. This should be done by the person to whom the disclosure was made, as they will have the best knowledge of what was said.

Under no circumstances should any member of PADS:

- Conduct their own investigation to substantiate claims
- Hold its own internal hearing (a "kangaroo court"), or
- Attempt to mediate a settlement of the matter instead of notifying relevant authorities.

Investigations conducted by members could lead to:

- The compromising of future legal proceedings
- The destruction of evidence by an accused person
- Intimidation of the person disclosing the information, or
- Intimidation of the child or young person being harmed (if the disclosure was made by somebody else).

The Queensland Police

The Queensland Police Service will investigate disclosures of suspected or substantiated harm to child or young people. This will often be done by officers of the Juvenile Aid Bureau or Child Abuse Unit.

If a disclosure is made to you, contact your closest Juvenile Aid Bureau or local police station and tell them you suspect, or have been told of, someone who has been harmed.

When contacting the police, they will want to know information such as:

- The details of any disclosure of harm
- The name, age, and the address of the child or young person harmed
- Where the child or young person is at that point in time
- Any identifying information regarding the alleged perpetrator of the harm, and
- Your details

The Department of Child Safety

Where the disclosure indicates that harm may have been caused by a family member, or where parents are not acting to protect their child from harm, the incident must be reported to the Department of Child Safety through your local service centre.

Disclosures of harm relate to shared family care or residential services for children and young people must also be reporting to the Department of Child Safety.

However, where the disclosure of harm indicates a criminal offence may have taken place, such as sexual assault of a child or young person, the matter should be reported to the Queensland Police Service.

Not sure who to contact?

If you are unsure whether the harm disclosed has been caused by a family member or someone outside the family, contact the Queensland Police Service. If it is a matter for the Department of Child Safety, the Queensland Police Service will refer the matter to them.

Appendix

Appendix A: Queensland Child Protection Requirements

This information is subject to change at any time. Refer to the Queensland Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian's website: www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au or contact 1800 688 275

In Queensland the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 requires people who work with children under the age of 18 years of age in certain categories of paid or voluntary employment or those who operate child-related businesses, to undergo a Working with Children Check. The Working with Children Check is a comprehensive assessment of a person's suitability to work with children based on their criminal history and teacher registration, if any. Those found suitable to work with children and young people are issued a suitability card, or blue card. **The blue card must be renewed every two years.**

Requirements

PADS is responsible for applying to the Queensland Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian (CCYPCG) for Working with Children Checks on employees and volunteers who work with children or young people. People carrying on a regulated business are responsible for applying for their own Working with Children Check. **These requirements apply despite the existence or absence of our member protection policy.**

All our volunteers and certain paid employees that work with children or young people in the following categories of employment must apply for a blue card:

- *schools – employees other than teachers including non-teaching staff
- Private teaching or instructing
- *education programs conducted outside of school
- Sport or active recreation

(Note that categories of employment not relevant to the activities of PADS have not been listed above)

Categories marked with a * are retrospectively screened. This means all people who work in these categories of employment must hold a blue card regardless of when they started work.

Application forms to apply for a suitability notice for a paid employee, volunteer or person carrying on a regulated business can be downloaded from www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au. Screening for volunteers is free and paid employees and people carrying on a regulated business are \$40.00 at the time of writing this.

1. **Employees** who work, or are likely to work, with children and young people for at least:

- eight consecutive days, or
- once a week, each week, over four weeks, or
- once a fortnight, each fortnight, over eight weeks, or
- once a month, each month over six months

Must undergo a criminal history check.

Paid employees can begin or continue to work in regulated employment while waiting for the outcome of their blue card application.

People working in regulated employment, which is 'one-off' or on a short-term basis (where the duration of their employment is less than that listed above) are not required to undergo a criminal history check.

If PADS knows or reasonably suspects that an employee who is not retrospectively checked has a criminal history relevant to the working with children or young people, PADS can apply for a blue card for that person. The application form for this is a 'Current Employee blue card application form'.

Recent amendments to the Act require PADS to develop and implement a risk management strategy to promote the well-being of children in their care and protect them from harm.

The strategy caters for the following types of employees:

- A person who has started work pending the outcome of their blue card application
- A blue card holder

- A person in regulated employment who is not required to hold a blue card, and
- A person who the Commissioner is reassessing.

2. Volunteers working with children in PADS must have a criminal history check if they are involved in direct & unsupervised activity. Application forms for us to apply for a suitability notice for a volunteer can also be downloaded from www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au. Screening for volunteers is free.

Exemptions

The following people are exempt from the Working with Children Check:

- children under 18 who are volunteers (except students required to work in regulated employment as part of their studies with PADS)
- Parents who volunteer their services or conduct activities through PADS.

(Only exemptions relevant to the activities of PADS have been listed above.)

3. Businesses: A person carrying on the following regulated businesses within PADS must also apply for a blue card:

- [private teaching, coaching or tutoring](#)
- [education programs conducted outside of schools](#)
- providers of recreational activities such as sporting camps and programs (excluding [amusement parks](#))

(Only the regulated businesses which conduct activities of relevance to PADS have been listed above.)

As at the date of this Policy, PADS does not conduct any activities in any other State but if it does so in the future, it will access the relevant State legislation, especially with regards to child protection, and ensure that its Members comply with that legislation.

Interstate Child Protection Legislation requirements can be accessed as follows;-

New South Wales – www.kids.nsw.gov.au or contact 02 9286 7219

Western Australia – www.checkwwc.wa.gov.au or contact 1800 883 979

Victoria – <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au> or contact 1300 652 879

South Australia – www.familiesandcommunities.sa.gov.au or contact 08 8416 6633

Appendix B: PADS' Code of Conduct

INTRODUCTION

This code is designed

- To return the element of enjoyment and satisfaction to junior handlers.
- To make adults aware that young people play to satisfy themselves and not necessarily to satisfy adults or member of their own peer group.
- To improve the physical fitness of youth by making it attractive, safe and enjoyable for all young people.
- To constantly remind Members, Instructors, and Parents, that the sport of dog agility must be administered, taught and provided, for the good of those young people who wish to participate.

COMMITTEE MEMBER'S CODE

1. Ensure that equal opportunities for participation in agility are made available to all irrespective of ability.
2. Equipment and facilities must be appropriate to the maturity level of the junior handlers.
3. Remember that a dog should always be trained by the use of positive handling and training methods. Play down the importance of clear rounds and awards.
4. Ensure that all members, parents of children, children and wherever possible spectators and/or invitees are aware of PADS' codes of conduct.
5. Offer training sessions to instructors to improve the standards of instructing with emphasis on positive handling of their dog, good sportsmanship and the development of good technical skills.
6. Ensure adequate supervision is maintained at all club training sessions and events.
7. Behave in a manner to set an example for all participants.
8. Encourage parents to take an active interest in what their child or children is doing and in PADS.

INSTRUCTOR'S CODE

1. You have responsibility for the handler and his or her dog. EXERCISE IT.
2. Be reasonable in your demands on junior handlers', energy and enthusiasm. Remember that they have other interests and demands.
3. Teach all handlers that the rules of agility as designated by the Agility Dog Association of Australia Ltd and which are amended from time to time are mutual agreements, which no one should evade or break.
4. Equipment must be appropriate to the maturity level of the junior handlers.
5. Ensure that all handlers have equal opportunity to participate in a class.
6. Remember that young people participate in agility for fun and enjoyment. Never ridicule or yell at any handler, especially a junior handler, for making mistakes.
7. Ensure that all handlers, including children, use positive training and handling methods.
8. Ensure that all handlers, including children, do not subject their dog or dogs to any form of harsh handling.
9. Develop respect for the judgment of other instructors as well as the ability of handlers.
10. Remember that young people need an instructor they can respect. Be generous with your praise when it is deserved and set a good example.
11. Make a personal commitment to keep yourself informed on sound instructing principles and the principles of growth and development of young people.
12. Encourage young people to develop basic skills and avoid over extending themselves during their formative years.
13. Create opportunities to teach sportsmanship, just as you would in teaching the basic skills.
14. Ensure that efforts for both skill improvement and good sportsmanship are rewarded by praise.
15. Set a good example by personal good behaviour.

MEMBER'S CODE

- 1 You have a responsibility for your own dog and its behavior.
- 2 Comply with the Rules of PADS and treat all other PADS' members with respect.
- 3 The rules of agility as designated by the Agility Dog Association of Australia Ltd and which are amended from time to time are mutual agreements, which no one should evade or break.
- 4 Do not argue with any instructor and follow the directions of the instructors to the best of your ability.
- 5 Only train your dog by the use of positive training and handling methods and that you do not use any form of harsh handling,
- 6 Be a good sport. Applaud other handlers' efforts and achievements, especially junior handlers.
- 7 Treat all PADS' members, as you yourself would like to be treated.
- 8 Remember that the goals of the sport of dog agility are to have fun, improve your skills and feel good.
- 9 Co-operate with your committee members and instructors, as without them you do NOT have a club.
- 10 Report in accordance with the requirements of PADS and/or ADAA that their dog has been diagnosed by a veterinary with kennel cough or it is reasonably suspected by the Member or ADAA Member, that the dog has kennel cough.
- 11 Keep their dog quarantined from all other dogs apart from other dogs within your own residence.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CODE

- 1 Participate in agility for the 'enjoyment', not just to please your parents or instructor(s).
- 2 Comply with all the Rules of PADS and treat all other PADS' members with respect.
- 3 Do not argue with any instructor and follow the directions of the instructors to the best of your ability
- 4 Be a good sport. Applaud other handler's efforts and achievements.
- 5 Treat all PADS' members, as you yourself would like to be treated.
- 6 Remember that the goals of the sport of dog agility are to have fun and to use positive training and handling methods.
- 7 Improve your skills and feel good.
- 8 Co-operate with your instructors and committee members as without them you do NOT have a Club.

PARENTS' CODE

- 1 Do not force an unwilling youngster to participate in the sport of dog agility.
- 2 Remember, young people are involved in the sport of dog agility for their enjoyment, not yours.
- 3 Encourage your child to always participate in accordance with the rules and regulations.
- 4 Teach young people that an honest effort and settling the dog up for success is as important as achieving a clear round or completion of any obstacles.
- 5 Turn defeat into victory by helping young people work towards skill improvement and good sportsmanship. Never ridicule or yell at your child for making a mistake or not succeeding.
- 6 Remember that young people learn best by example.
- 7 Do not publicly question an instructor's or judge's judgment and never his/her honesty.
- 8 Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from the sport of dog agility.
- 9 Recognise the value and importance of all volunteers, including instructors and committee members. They give of their time and resources to provide recreational activities for young people.
- 10 If you drop your child at the Pads' ground prior to training or any other activity conducted by PADS, you must not leave until at least two Committee Members and/or Instructors have arrived at the grounds and if at night, the field lights have been turned on.

- 11 If you do not stay with your child at a training session, open day or any other activity conducted by PADS, you must ensure that you are at the grounds to collect your child 10 minutes before the designated finish time at the very latest.
- 12 **You must be contactable by telephone at all times and must be in a position to come and collect your child from the PADS' grounds straight away if requested by a Committee member or an Instructor.**
- 13 **You must provide both an appropriate home and mobile phone numbers to PADS.**
- 14 **You must comply with any requirement of the Australian Dog Association of Australia in respect to your child or children if he, she or they participate in any ADAA activity or sanctioned activity.**

SPECTATORS' and INVITEES' CODE

- 1 Remember that young people play organised sports for their own fun.
- 2 Be on your best behaviour. Don't use profane language, or harass committee members, instructors, judges, or any other person assisting in the running of any event, competition or seminar.
- 3 Never ridicule or scold a handler for making a mistake while handling his or her dog.
- 4 Condemn the use of violence in all forms.
- 5 Respect all instructions, advice and opinion of the instructors and the judge's decisions at any competition.
- 6 Encourage handlers to participate in the sport of dog agility in accordance with the rules and regulations as laid down by the Agility Dog Association of Australia Ltd and PADS..
- 7 Remember PADS' Committee has the power to site Handlers, Spectators and/or Invitees for behaviour that may bring PADS and/or the sport of dog agility into disrepute.

Appendix C: PADS' Incident Report Form

Incident Report Form

Date of Writing Report: _____ Time of Writing Report: _____

Name(s) of the person or people involved in the incident: (OPTIONAL)

Description of the incident:

Date the incident occurred: _____

Location where incident occurred:

Nature of the incident:

Summary of the events prior to incident:

Immediate action taken:

If no action taken – reason:

Name of person completing form: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of person to whom the report was submitted:

Appendix D: Child Protection Risk Management Plan

Calculating the level of risk

1. Evaluate the likelihood of a risk, occurring, according to the ratings listed in Table 1
2. Evaluate the consequences if the incident occurred, according to the ratings in Table 2
3. Calculate the level of risk by finding the intersection between the likelihood and the consequences as per Table 3

Table 1: Measurers of Likelihood

Descriptor	Definition	
Almost certain	Is expected to occur in most circumstances	1 / month
Likely	Will probably occur at some time	1 / 3 months
Possible	Should occur at some time	1 / year
Unlikely	Could occur at some time	1 / 5 years
Rare	May occur in exceptional circumstances	1 / >5 years

Table 2: Measurers of Consequence or Impact

Descriptor	Definition
Extreme	High financial loss; death; adverse public reaction / media attention; legal action.
Major	Major financial loss; extensive injuries; loss of assets; revenue not collected
Moderate	High financial loss; medical treatment required; revenue collection delayed; no / insufficient systems / controls in place to mitigate risk; insufficient staff skills / knowledge.
Minor	Medium financial loss; first aid treatment; some compensating controls in place; policies/procedures not complied with
Insignificant	Low financial loss; no injuries

Table 3: Risk Rating

Likelihood	Consequence				
	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Almost Certain	Medium	Medium	High	High	High
Likely (4)	Low	Medium	High	High	High
Possible (3)	Low	Low	Medium	High	High
Unlikely (2)	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
Rare (1)	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

(Adapted from Australian/New Zealand Standard for Risk Management AS/NZS 4360:2004)

Risk Rating

High Immediate action required and detailed research and management planning required at committee/board level

Medium Membership attention needed and management responsibility specified

Low Manage by routine procedures, unlikely to need specific application of resources

Risk Action

High Reject, Manage, Reduce, Transfer

Medium Manage, Reduce, Transfer, Accept

Low Manage, Accept

Appendix F: Recommended Guidelines: Instructors and Committee Members

Instructors and committee members need to be aware that not all children will understand an action or request in the same manner. One child may see an action as usual or acceptable behaviour while another may find it unacceptable. A child's interpretation of an action may also be influenced by cultural and religious differences, gender and prior experiences. It is important therefore to be aware of your communication style.

The following principles or actions may help instructors provide a safe environment.

- Ensure your actions are at all times unambiguously professional. Give a verbal explanation, in front of all handlers (and preferably parents as well) of how, where, when and why you may need to touch handlers.
- Remember that the welfare of the child or children is always of paramount importance.
- Know the policies, complaint processes and guidelines under the Child Protection Risk Management Program and how they apply to you.
- Understand and commit to PADS' Codes of Conduct.
- Understand how the child protection legislation in your state/territory may affect you.
- Ensure that any physical conduct with children is appropriate to the development of skills required for dog agility e.g. it would be appropriate to teach a child how to do a front cross by putting your arms on the shoulders, but it would not be appropriate to make contact around the buttocks region as this is not essential to the development of front cross skills. Generally physical contact with players should be to develop skills, to give sports massage, to treat an injury or to prevent or respond to an injury.
- Be careful about which part of your body is and how much of it is in contact with a child's body.
- Avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with children. Try not to separate yourself and a child from the line of sight of other people. If you need to have a private talk with a child about their ability or behaviour, do this in an open place near others. Invite another instructor or support person to join the conversation or talk to more than one child at a time.
- Have sufficient instructors/assistants for effective supervision based on the age and number of children involved. Provide for disability considerations in regard to supervision.
- Use positive and age-appropriate language when talking to and in the presence of children. Avoid bad or aggressive language that could intimidate a child or set a bad example.
- Follow the club policy that if a parent is late picking up their child that another instructor or committee member will wait with you and the child. This will also enable you to concentrate on making contact with the parent.
- Avoid the risk of being left alone with a child by having a parent, guardian or support person, such as another instructor or committee member assist you with the training. Require that person to wait with you until all children have left.
- Do not engage in or let others engage in any of the following: -
 - Abusive initiation or team bonding activities
 - Forcing children into 'macho type' activities
 - Rough, physical hurtful or sexually provocative games
 - Regular scapegoating, ridiculing, rejecting, isolating or taking the 'mickey' out of a child
- Maintain control – avoid losing your temper (verbally or physically). If you find you regularly lose your temper with children you should seek support or consider whether you have the patience to work with children. Some ideas to assist with maintaining control include: -
 - Set up basic rules at the beginning of the season, such as follow instructions, have a go, no put-downs. Make sure children are aware of these rules.
 - Give positive messages.
 - Have a time out area for children that are not behaving.

References:

Australian Sports Commission website. Ethics – Child Protection in Sport (<http://www.ausport.gov.au/ethics/cpstrategies.asp>)
Play by The Rules website (<http://www.playbytherules.net.au>) - Guidelines for Coaches and Officials.
NSW Department of Sport and Recreation (<http://dsr.nsw.gov.au>) - Child Protection in Sport and Recreation.

Recommended Guidelines: Parents

Parents often turn to sport as a safe place for children to build character, develop skills, learn valuable lessons and to have fun. While involvement in sport remains a positive experience for most participants, parents are now aware that children can face the risk of being harassed and abused in sport. In addition to clubs, parents can also play a key role in creating a safe environment for children in sport.

The following actions will help parents contribute to providing a safe environment.

- Get involved and get to know your child's instructor(s). Maintain open and frank communication. If things occur that disturb you, talk to the instructor about them.
- Speak out when you hear language or attitudes that contribute to a negative or unsafe environment. You may wish to pursue your issues with the club executive.
- Be careful not to put instructors on pedestals. Tell your children its okay to say 'no' if the coach is doing something that makes them feel 'creepy'.
- Make an effort to attend training and competitions whenever you can.
- Be wary of private, closed training sessions. If they occur on a regular basis ask the instructor for an explanation.
- Be wary of any increases of the amount of time the instructor spends with your children beyond the training session.
- If you volunteer in sport and ask to take part in screening, accept this as a positive step to keep children safe.
- Make sure you are not part of the problem. Don't sling verbal abuse at instructors, committee members or others.
- **Be aware of and comply with that part of the Parents Code of Conduct in respect to the dropping off and picking up of your child or children. It is not PADS' responsibility to collect or take your child home if you are delayed.**
- Know and abide by the Parents Guidelines, and encourage others to do the same.
- Encourage your child to play by the rules.
- Never ridicule your child for making a mistake.

References:

Australian Sports Commission website. Ethics – Child Protection in Sport
(<http://www.ausport.gov.au/ethics/cpstrategies.asp>)

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES: Drop off and pick up of participants by parents/guardians

Children may be dropped off before an activity and picked up afterwards by their parents or guardians in accordance with the Parents Code of Conduct. In other instances, children may make their own way to and from an activity. On their way to and from children may be exposed to potential risk. Procedures should be put in place to minimise these risks.

Whilst clubs may have different strategies to meet specific circumstances the following considerations provide a guideline.

- Agree with parents a set procedure for drop off and pick up arrangements, including whether a child makes their own way to and from an activity, or will be dropped off and picked up. Let children and their parents/guardians know the times of training or any other activity held on PADS' grounds and when they can expect to collect their children. Advise them that it is not your responsibility to transport children home if parents are delayed.
- Ensure there is a buffer period where an instructor or committee member arrives a certain period of time before an activity starts and stays a certain period of time after it ends.
- Have a club policy that another instructor or committee member will wait with the instructor/committee member and the child. This will also enable the instructor/committee member to concentrate on making contact with the parent/guardian.
- If you have a clubroom where there will be other people, have a club policy that latecomers are to collect their children from the clubroom. Wait with the child if possible (in the presence of others), and make contact with the parent/guardian if necessary.
- If there are other people at the ground or facility, wait for the parent/guardian closer to those people. In the meantime try to make contact with the parent/guardian.
- Avoid the risk of being alone with a child by having a parent/guardian or support person assist you with the training. Require that person to wait until all children have left.
- Have a club policy that there is a register of parent/guardian emergency contact numbers and make sure instructors/committee members have access to a phone.

References:

Play by The Rules website (<http://www.playbytherules.net.au>) - Guidelines for Coaches and Officials.

Commission for Children and Young People (<http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au>).

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES: Transport of Players/Participants

Ideally all players/participants should have their own transportation to and from sporting events. You should only provide transportation when:

- The driver is properly licensed
- Other players/participants/parents/guardians are in the vehicle
- The ride has been approved by parents/guardians
- The ride is directly to/from sports or recreation facilities
- You should also call someone and tell them what you are doing, the exact time you are leaving – so that you are accountable for your time.

References:

Play by The Rules website (<http://www.playbytherules.net.au>) - Guidelines for Coaches and Officials.

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES: Overnight Trips

- Always have more than one adult with children on an overnight trip/camp.
- There should always be more than one adult with a group of children, even if the number of children is small.
- Do not separate yourself and children from other adults.
- Obtain separate sleeping accommodation from the children (adults in separate rooms). However, ensure that adults are within hearing distance of the children to be able to respond to any alarm raised by a child.
- If an alarm is raised by a child more than one adult should respond.

References:

Play by The Rules website (<http://www.playbytherules.net.au>) - Guidelines for Coaches and Officials.

NSW Department of Sport and Recreation (<http://dsr.nsw.gov.au>) - Child Protection in Sport and Recreation.

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES: The Use of Images of Children

There have been concerns about the risks posed directly and indirectly to children and young people through the use of photographs on sports web sites and other publications. Evidence in Australia indicates that information posted on an Internet site or published in a magazine or newspaper can be used to target children, to locate them, and then to condition or groom them. Additionally images can be used or adapted for inappropriate use. The end result is that in spite of the best intentions on the part of the publisher, children can end up being victims of abuse.

Acquiring Images

- Permission needs to be obtained from the player's parent/guardian prior to taking the image. Ensure that they are aware of the way in which the image may be used.
- Request that professional photographers and/or spectators taking photographic/video images register with the club and gain permission.
- Clearly outline with professional photographers that all images taken will remain the property of the club, and cannot be used or sold for any other purpose. Clearly outline that all negatives/proofs etc. need to be destroyed or given to the club at the conclusion of the photo opportunity.
- Clearly outline and publicise what is considered appropriate behaviour and content to those taking photographic/video images.
- Do not allow unsupervised or individual access to players.
- Do not approve photo/video sessions outside the event venue or at a player's home.
- Provide details of who to contact if concerns or complaints of inappropriate photographic behaviour or content are raised.

Displaying Images

- Consider using models or illustrations for promotional/advertising purposes.
- Permission needs to be obtained from the player's parent/guardian prior to using their image. Ensure that they are aware of the way in which the image is to be used and how long the image will be displayed when used on a website.
- If the player is named, avoid using their image.
- If an image is used, avoid naming the athlete. If this is not possible avoid using both a first name and surname.
- Do not display personal information such as residential address, Email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from a parent/guardian first.
- Do not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school etc. as these can be used as grooming tools by pedophiles or other persons.
- Only use appropriate images of the player, relevant to the sport or activity, and suitably clothed. Images of players in an activity that involves minimal clothing or unusual body positions/poses, which could potentially be misused, should focus on the activity not on a particular child and avoid full face and body shots.
- Reduce the ability for the direct copying of pictures from a website to another source (i.e. disable the 'right mouse click' function).
- Provide details of who to contact if concerns or complaints of inappropriate image use are raised.

References:

Australian Sports Commission website. Ethics in Sport – Policies, Guidelines and Forms (<http://www.ausport.gov.au/ethics/childimages.asp>).