

# **WHITFORD HOCKEY CLUB INC.**

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **POLICY STATEMENT :**

The Whitford Hockey Club is committed to providing an environment that is safe for the participation of hockey activities. The Whitford Hockey Club will not tolerate the acts of child/youth maltreatment, which occurs when a child/youth has been subjected to sexual, emotional, physical or neglectful actions or inactions, which have resulted in significant harm or injury to the child/young person.

This Child Protection Policy conveys a message to all members and prospective members, responsible for hockey activities, particularly those involving young people under the age of 18 years, about minimizing maltreatment risks. Managers, coaches, officials and support staff have a responsibility to provide safeguards dedicated to the well being of those under 18 years of age (children/youth).

The abuse of children/youth members, by other members or external sources, is not acceptable and the Whitford Hockey Club encourages all incidents of such maltreatment be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT :**

Whitford Hockey Club endorses the following Code of Conduct for those people responsible for activities involving persons under the age of 18 years.

All members should meet the following requirements in regards to their conduct during hockey activities.

A coach/trainer will:

- Agree to abide by the code of conduct.
- Be responsible for matters concerning coaching, training and development.
- Maintain a 'duty of care' towards others and accountability for matters relating to training and competition.

'Duty of Care' requires everything 'reasonably practicable' to be done to protect the health and safety of all participants.

- Ensure that any physical contact with others is:
  1. Appropriate to the situation
  2. Necessary for the persons skill development
- Provide a safe environment for training and competition.
- Provide an environment that protects and respects the rights and emotions of individuals.

A manager will:

- Agree to abide by the code of conduct.
- Be responsible for the welfare and well being of team members and officials.
- Maintain a 'duty of care' towards team members and accountability for the management of the team.

An official/administrator will:

- Agree to abide by the code of conduct.
- Be fair, considerate and honest with others.
- Operate within the rules of Whitford Hockey Club.
- Be professional in their actions, language, presentation, manner and punctuality.
- Resolve conflicts fairly and promptly through established procedures.
- Maintain strict impartiality.
- Maintain a safe environment for others.
- Show concern and caution towards others.

## **PROTECTIVE MEASURES:**

Safeguards are necessary measures for those members who undertake the delivery of child/youth activities in their capacity as managers, coaches, trainers, officials, administrators etc. These are responsible positions in the organization and as such, risk minimization measures are being adopted to protect them from any misconceptions about their behaviour in performing their designated roles.

### **Risk Minimization Strategies**

1. Do not engage, or allow others to engage, in any of the following:
  - Abusive initiation ceremonies.
  - Sleeping close quarters with children/youths without a second adult representative/parent.
  - Aggressive, physically distressing or sexually provocative activities.
  - Physically or sexually suggestive comments to or about a child/youth (to be defined)
  - Inappropriate or intrusive touching of a child/youth (to be defined).
  - Actions or comments either implied or stated that are disrespectful to individuals, or which may cause emotional harm (to be defined).
2. Maintain an open door policy when conducting meetings and invite all children/youths, parents, friends and other members to participate in Child Protection discussions.
3. Male and female adults to accompany children/youths when undertaking activities away from home and especially over night.
4. Prevent opportunities/incidents where an adult/person of authority is isolated with a child/youth in a confined area/location.

(NB. These strategies are meant as a guide and should be developed to cater specifically for the club).

Prevention is the best cure when analysing the issues associated with Child Protection. Predicting possible problem areas and implementing procedures to ensure situations do not arise is vital. This process can begin with the selection of appropriate organisational members.

### **Screening Applicants**

1. Use accredited coaches and officials
2. Interview process / check references
3. National Police Clearance and criminal record check (International Checks may be conducted if required).
4. Confidential declaration form

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES :

The rights and responsibilities of both children/youth and adult members should be stated within the policy. Some of these may include;

### Children/Youths

Have the right to :

Are responsible for :

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• showing respect to both child/youth and adult members</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be listened to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keeping themselves safe</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be respected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accurately reporting inappropriate behaviour to adults, children/youth</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• privacy</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take risks in a protective environment</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an inclusive environment</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be referred to professional help if required</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be protected from abuse by other members or outside sources.</li> </ul>	

### Members

Have the right to :

Are responsible for :

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access ongoing training and information on all aspects of leading/managing activities for Children/ youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering teamwork to ensure safety of child/youth members in their care</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support in the reporting of suspected abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using appropriate team management behaviour</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access professional support services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responding to child/youth statements and concerns about alleged abuse</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be protected from abuse by children/youths, other adult members and parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring the rights and responsibilities of child/youth members are enforced</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting suspected abuse to the appropriate authorities</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not abusing members physically, emotionally or sexually</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining confidentiality about sensitive information as designed by the appropriate authority.</li> </ul>

### Organisation

Have the right to :

Are responsible for :

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expect all members to comply with its Code of Conduct</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing a safe environment for members</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expect all children/youth members to maintain reasonable standards of behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing ongoing training and information for members</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take appropriate action if members breach the Code of Conduct or the Club's Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wide promotion of policy and procedures</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expect all members to undertake appropriate training when advised to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilitating open discussion on member protection issues</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expect all members not to abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide support to members who report accusations of abuse</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take appropriate action in the event of accusations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• treating suspected abuse information confidentially</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• request police checks relating to convictions in relevant areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• taking appropriate action if members breach standards of reasonable behaviour or policies and regulations.</li> </ul>

In addition, the policy should make allowances to provide support for the alleged perpetrator. In some cases, a simple misunderstanding can lead to accusations being made, resulting devastating effects on the accused person. For this reason, all people accused of an offence should be offered support from a placement officer.

### **PROCEDURES FOR ADDRESSING PROTECTION BREACHES :**

Sport, leisure and recreational clubs must ensure that within the policy, a clear process of how to manage child/youth maltreatment is developed. For this purpose, actions have been divided into separate situations.

1. Concerns that a child/youth is being harmed at home or outside the club environment.
2. Concerns that a club member is responsible for harming a child/youth within the club environment.

#### **Concerns that a child/youth is being harmed at home or outside the club environment.**

##### **1. Report to the person in Charge**

When a club member has concerns/evidence that a child/youth has been or is being maltreated, then they should advise the person in charge as soon as possible ensuring full confidentiality. Early consultation with the Department for Community Development (Joondalup Office Ph: 9301 3600) is encouraged.

##### **2. Record**

The club member should keep a written record of observations, suspicions and statements made by the child/youth. Records should include time, date, names of witnesses and actions taken.

##### **3. Consult with the Department for Community Development**

It is recommended that members do not confront the person alleged responsible or attempt to investigate their suspicions. The Department will perform this task and involve the Police Service as appropriate.

##### **4. Maintain Confidentiality**

This information should be treated as highly confidential. Discussions about the matter should not occur and documentation should be securely stored.

##### **5. Report / Notify**

At present Western Australia does not require mandatory reporting of suspected abuse. This means you are not legally required to report all cases of abuse. However, if you have concerns you are strongly encouraged to report child/youth maltreatment

to the Department for Community Development, keeping details of the date, time and name of the duty officer. If a report is made in good faith, the person reporting is not liable for prosecution for making the report. The Department will then determine what response would be in the best interest of the child and family concerned, based on the evidence and any past reports.

## **6. Don't Investigate**

Club members should not get involved in investigating their suspicions. After reporting details to the Department for Community Development, the best course of action is determined. Under the Child Welfare Act 1947, the Department has authority to conduct investigations, interviews and even remove the child/youth from the club environment.

The Department has a policy not to reveal the identity of persons notifying suspected cases of child/youth maltreatment. In some cases however, it is not possible to prevent offenders from guessing the source of the notification.

**Concerns that a club member is responsible for harming a child/youth within the club environment.**

### **1. Report to the person in charge**

When a club member has concerns that a child/youth from the club has been or is being maltreated by another club member, then they should advise a senior club member (so long as the senior club member is not the alleged offender) as soon as possible.

### **2. Record**

The club member raising concerns should keep a written record of their observations, suspicions and statements made about the matter. Records should include details of time, date, names of witnesses, observations and actions taken.

### **3. Consult with the Department for Community Development**

It is recommended that members do not confront the person alleged responsible or attempt to investigate their suspicions. The Department will perform this task and involve the Police Service as appropriate.

### **4. Maintain Confidentiality**

A common thread through all stages of managing a child/youth maltreatment allegation is confidentiality. Information regarding the identities of the children/youth allegedly abused and the alleged perpetrator,, as well as the particulars of the allegations need to be treated in the utmost confidence.

### **5. Report / Notify**

The most senior club member will report child/youth maltreatment to the Department for Community Development. It is recommended that the Department undertake all further tasks as they have qualified staff for these situations. These tasks would include;

- Advising parents of the child/youth involved.
- Advising staff (to enable them to answer questions and fulfill their duties).

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