

# Australian Powerchair Football Association Inc.

## Child Safety Policy

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### **Purpose**

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers of the Australian Powerchair Football Association (APFA) to child safety and to outline the policies and practices the Association has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

### **Commitment to Child Safety**

All children who are a part of APFA have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our priority, and APFA has a zero tolerance of child abuse. APFA aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun and the association's activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

### **Application of this Policy**

This policy was developed by the association in collaboration with staff, volunteers and the children who use our services and their parents.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:

- administrators
- coaches
- officials
- participants
- any other registered member.

All the people to which this policy applies have a role and responsibility in relation to child protection. They must all:

- appropriately act on any identified potential risks of child abuse.
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children.
- understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.

Please note that competitions and other events are typically hosted by APFA's member associations, each of which has a Child Safety Policy. When a member association hosts an event, their policy takes precedence.

### **Child Abuse**

Child abuse can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child, and these are circumstances that the Association is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

### **Children's Rights to Safety and Participation**

The Association encourages children to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

### **Valuing Diversity**

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families.
- promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.
- welcome all children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation.
- seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural and community backgrounds.

### **Recruiting staff and volunteers**

The association takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers:

- Interview staff and volunteers prior to appointments within the Association.
- All appointments must be approved by the APFA Executive Board Members
- Require Working with Children Checks be performed for relevant positions.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements is included in advertisements and as part of the induction process for new staff or volunteers.

### **Supporting staff and volunteers**

The Association seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision, so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated.

### **Reporting a child safety concern or complaint**

The Association has mandated that all registered members are responsible for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children relating to Child Safety. Expected actions for dealing with a child at risk include but are not limited to:

- If a person is in immediate risk or danger, call Police on 000.
- If you have reasonable grounds to suspect a child has been or is at risk of being harmed, call the police and/or relevant child protection agency in your state/territory.
- Report all relevant information to the appropriate person within your club/association.
- Report any potential breach of this Policy to Sport Integrity Australia via the online form at [www.sportintegrity.gov.au](http://www.sportintegrity.gov.au).

### **Risk Management**

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- using change room facilities.
- using accommodation or overnight stays.
- travelling or
- physical contact when coaching or managing children.

### **Reviewing this policy**

This policy will be reviewed every two years, and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers involved in the Association.

### **Date for Review:**