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Child Protection Risk Management Strategy
Springwood Seals Netball Club Inc.



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1. Child Protection Policy

Date Last Updated - October 2011

Purpose

- To prevent foreseeable harm to children and young people in Springwood Seals Netball Club's care
- To ensure that all volunteers who work within Springwood Seals Netball Club are assessed for their suitability to work with children under the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000 (Qld)* (where exemptions do not apply)
- To ensure that all people involved with the operations of the club are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the above

Who Must Comply with this Policy?

- Volunteers, coaches, officials, umpires, committee members
- Players, members, parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors
- Children and young people

Statement of Commitment

Springwood Seals Netball Club is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who access its services and is dedicated to protecting them from harm.

The club therefore:

- Ensures that all members treat children and young people with respect and understanding at all times
- Ensures that those who deal with children and young people within the organisation undergo the Working with Children Check and hold a positive notice Blue Card (where exemptions do not apply)
- Prohibits any forms of abuse against children
- Carefully selects, screens and monitors people whose roles require them to have contact with children
- Ensures the club's Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children and Young People is promoted, enforced and reviewed
- Provides clear procedures for raising concerns or complaints
- Provides education and/or information on child abuse and child protection

Implementing the Policy

This policy will be effective from the date upon which it is adopted by the Springwood Seals Netball Club's Management Committee. All committee members and volunteers who work with children and young people will receive a copy of the policy upon its adoption and are expected to familiarise themselves with it. All members will be notified of the policy.

Monitoring Compliance

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Management Committee via regular liaison with club members and volunteers.

Breaches

The club will review any allegations of breaches of this policy and will take steps to minimise the risk of further breaches. Non-compliance with the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000 (Qld)* will result in penalties imposed under the Act. Refer to the Act for information regarding failure to comply.

Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, in line with the club's review of its entire Child Protection Risk Management Strategy. The policy will be reviewed with regard given to any aspects of the document that require changes. This review will be carried out by the Springwood Seals Netball Club Management Committee.

Policy

All volunteers within Springwood Seals Netball Club who directly and/or individually deal with children under the age of 18 will undergo the Working with Children Check and will hold a positive notice Blue Card (where exemptions do not apply).

Those relevant volunteers who do not undergo a Working with Children Check or hold a Blue Card will not be permitted to deal with children or young people. If a volunteer's application for a Blue Card is refused and a negative notice is issued by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian, Springwood Seals Netball Club will refuse that person's involvement with children and young people registered with the club.

Club volunteers are not required to undergo a Working with Children Check or hold a Blue Card where exemptions apply (as defined by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian), including if:

- They are a volunteer parent of a child who receives the same or similar services to which the employment relates (the club has the power to determine whether or not the nature of a volunteer parent's child-related activities differ from the activities in which their child participates)
- They are a guest of a school or "recognised body" [which includes incorporated organisations]:
 - For the purpose of observing, supplying information or entertainment to 10 or more people, and
 - The activity is for 10 days or less on no more than two occasions per year, and
 - The person is unlikely to be physically present with a child without another adult being present
- They are performing the function of employment at a national or state event organised by a school or "recognised body" (operating at a state or national level):
 - For a sporting, cultural or skill based activity, and
 - The event is attended by more than 100 people, and
 - The work is for 10 days or less on no more than two occasions per year, and
 - The person is unlikely to be physically present with a child without another adult being present
- They are a child under 18 years of age volunteering;
- They are a registered teacher or police officer in Queensland (who are required to apply for an exemption card when providing regulated services to children which are outside their professional duties)

A volunteer, unless exempt, must have a valid Blue Card before they start working with children and young people.

Where there is evidence, disclosure or reasonable suspicion of harm or abuse to a child or young person within the club, the Department of Communities, Child Safety Services or the police will be notified immediately. All disclosures and allegations of child abuse will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. A person will not be victimised for reporting an allegation of child abuse and the privacy of all persons concerned will be respected.

2. Code of Conduct for Interacting with Children and Young People

Date Last Updated - October 2011

Who Must Comply with this Code?

- Volunteers, coaches, officials, umpires, committee members
- Players, members, parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors
- Children and young people

Code of Conduct

- Use appropriate language when dealing with children and young people
- Do not make inappropriate physical contact with any children or young people
- If coaching or officiating, maintain professional relationships with children and young people within the club and treat them with the same respect you would offer an adult
- Do not tolerate bullying within the club, either amongst children and young people, or from adults towards children and young people
- Place the safety and welfare of children and young people above all else
- Report all violent and illegal acts
- Set a good example for children and young people within the club by the way you dress, speak and act

If anyone within the club is faced with an ethical dilemma, they should ask themselves:

- Is this action legal?
- Will the decision be in the best interest of the child or young person?
- Do I have all relevant information to make an informed, responsible decision?
- Is it consistent with the organisation and its policies?
- Do I think it is the right thing to do – if not, why not?
- Would other people think it was the right thing to do? If not, why not?
- What will the consequences be for our organisation, for my colleagues and for me?
- Can I justify my actions?
- What will happen if this matter becomes public, for example, in the media?

3. Recruitment, Training and Management of Volunteers

To assist with effective child protection, Springwood Seals Netball Club will implement appropriate recruitment, selection, screening, induction, monitoring and management of volunteers who work with children and young people within the club.

Recruitment

Volunteers will come from varied sources. They may be members themselves, past members, people from the local community, friends or relatives. Springwood Seals Netball Club has considered the best ways to recruit volunteers.

When recruiting volunteers, the club is selling itself to potential helpers. Talking about the benefits of being associated with the club is very important when communicating with potential volunteers.

In identifying the methods most suitable for finding volunteers, the club has considered the following points:

- Personal contact (i.e. asking potential volunteers for assistance, face-to-face) is usually most successful
- It is necessary to create an awareness of the club's volunteer opportunities by effectively communicating the volunteer requirements of the organisation through publicity, promotion and personal interaction
- Some volunteers must be elected or appointed under the club's constitution (for example, the Management Committee)

Any person nominated by the Management Committee to recruit volunteers will implement this Child Protection Risk Management Strategy in all recruiting activities. In particular, applicants for positions dealing with children will be required to demonstrate an ability to comply with child safety requirements and will be informed that it will be mandatory for them to hold and maintain a Blue Card while working for the club (where an exemption does not apply).

Selection and Screening

Once found, volunteers will be screened to ensure that they fit with the club and with the positions to be filled.

In screening volunteers, the club recognises the importance of assessing the skills, experience and availability of potential volunteers, or their commitment to gathering the necessary skills and experience, to match them to the volunteer needs of the club.

The process that the club will follow in selecting and screening its volunteers is illustrated below:



Induction and Training

Once new volunteers have been successfully recruited and screened, the club will ensure their effective induction. Induction will include making workers aware of the following:

- The club's commitment to an environment which is safe and friendly to children and young people
- The club's child and youth friendly policies, Codes of Conduct and procedures
- Procedures to follow when harm is disclosed or suspected
- Their rights and responsibilities
- What is expected of them
- What they can and can't do – the boundaries of their roles
- The roles of the key people in the club and to whom the volunteer should report or go to for help
- What to expect if there is an allegation of harm made against them or to them
- Reporting and grievance procedures

Once selected, volunteers working with children and young people will be required to obtain a Blue Card (where an exemption does not apply). The club's Blue Card Register will be used to monitor who within the club holds a current Blue Card, as well as Blue Card numbers and expiry dates.

Training will be provided to volunteers to outline their responsibilities under the club's Codes of Conduct and other organisational policies. Training will also be provided that alerts workers to the nature of harm which can occur to children and young people, and how to respond to disclosures or suspicions of harm. Training for volunteers will aim to:

- Enhance the skills and knowledge of workers, enabling them to do their job effectively
- Reduce exposure to risks
- Support friendly environments for children and young people

The club may use information sheets, training materials and strategies to help volunteers and parents identify and manage risks of harm. Training should not only be undertaken when a volunteer begins service. Rather, ongoing improvement grows from continuous learning, meaning that regular training opportunities should be made available to volunteers. Training that is properly planned and well-executed will increase volunteer confidence, improve the competency of those people the organisation relies upon and will motivate volunteers to achieve organisational objectives.

Training can be either formal or informal. Formal training is that which is provided in a structured manner, such as the training required for accreditation or certification (for example, first aid certificates and TAFE courses). Informal training is non-structured education that is focused on conveying important information that will assist volunteers to do their jobs and to understand their roles and responsibilities. 'Learning by doing' is well recognised for its effectiveness and can be successfully implemented in the volunteer environment. It is important that adequate supervision is provided by experienced people where 'learning by doing' is being conducted.

When looking to formally train volunteers, the club should remember that it may be able to access funding from the Department of Communities, Sport and Recreation Services to pay for (or to subsidise) the costs of training.

4. Handling Disclosures and Suspicions of Harm

Receiving a Disclosure

If club volunteers are confronted with disclosures of harm or suspect harm to children and young people, they will respond professionally and in the best interests of the child or young person subjected to the alleged harm. Complaints will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially.

Any volunteer confronted with disclosures of harm will:

- Not react in a shocked or critical way
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling
- Say they need to tell someone else who can help the child or young person
- Reassure the child or young person that they will only tell someone who will make them safe
- Ultimately believe the child or young person and assume that they are telling the truth
- Ask only non-leading questions
- Only ask the child or young person enough questions to determine the need to report the matter to the Queensland Police Service or the Department of Communities, Child Safety Services

Dealing with a Disclosure

Following a disclosure of harm from a child or young person, the club will investigate whether the allegation should be reported to the Queensland Police Service and/or the Department of Communities, Child Safety Services. If the incident(s) are serious or criminal in nature, the club's response should be immediate. All other allegations should be actioned as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours. For allegations of a serious or criminal nature, the club will follow these guidelines:

- If the allegation involves a child at risk of harm, the incident should immediately be reported to the police and/or the Department of Communities, Child Safety Services
- The club will contact the Department of Communities, Child Safety Services for advice if there is any doubt whether the complaint should be reported
- If the child's parent(s) or guardian are suspected of committing the abuse, the club will report the allegation to the Police or the Department of Communities, Child Safety Services immediately

Strict confidentiality, impartiality, fairness and due process must be maintained at all times. Under no circumstances will Springwood Seals Netball Club Inc. conduct its own investigations into any serious allegations or allegations of a criminal nature.

5. Managing Breaches of the Risk Management Strategy

The club will review any allegations of breaches of the Child Protection Risk Management Strategy and will take steps to minimise the risk of any further breaches.

Non-compliance with the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000 (Qld)* will result in penalties imposed under the Act. Refer to the Act for information regarding failure to comply.

6. Compliance with Blue Card Legislation

Springwood Seals Netball Club will comply with Blue Card legislation by ensuring that all relevant volunteers within the club undergo the Working with Children Check and obtain a positive notice Blue Card (where exemptions do not apply).

The club's Management Committee will assist relevant workers in seeking approval to work with children from the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian. Compliance with the Child Protection Policy included within this Risk Management Strategy will help ensure that the club complies with Blue Card legislation.

The club will respect the confidentiality of information relating to applications by volunteers for Blue Cards and will maintain appropriate systems to protect the privacy of applicants.

7. High Risk Activities and Special Events

Volunteers have less control over events and activities which are conducted away from the club's home grounds. Volunteers must therefore ensure that participating in 'away' events or activities will not compromise Springwood Seals Netball Club's commitment to providing a safe environment for children and young people by:

- Ensuring that enough information has been provided to parents or carers so they can make an informed decision about whether they want their children to attend
- Evaluating any risks involved with attending the event and developing procedures to minimise those risks
- Ensuring that event organisers are committed to an environment which is safe and friendly for children and young people and that they have developed policies and procedures supporting such an environment

8. Rights and Expectations of Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians 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 should be aware that children can face the risk of being harassed and abused in sport. In addition to the club's volunteers, parents can 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 coach. Maintain open and frank communication. If things occur that disturb you, talk to the coach 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 Management Committee
- Be careful not to put coaches on pedestals. Tell your children it's okay to say 'no' if the coach is doing something that makes them feel uncomfortable
- Make an effort to attend training and games whenever you can
- Be wary of private, closed training sessions. If they occur on a regular basis ask the coach for an explanation
- Be wary of any increases in the amount of time the coach spends with your children beyond the training session
- If you volunteer and are asked 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 engage in verbal abuse of officials or coaches
- Know and abide by the club's Codes of Conduct and encourage others to do the same
- Encourage your child to play by the rules
- Never ridicule a child for making a mistake

9. Strategies for Communication and Support

Copies of this Child Protection Risk Management Strategy will be made available to all volunteers who deal with children and young people within Springwood Seals Netball Club. This will ensure that all of the club's workers understand what is expected of them with regard to providing a safe and friendly environment for children and young people.

10. Further Information and Assistance

For more information regarding the protection of children and young people, contact¹:

Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian

1800 688 275

info@ccypcg.qld.gov.au

www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au

Queensland Police Service

131 444

www.police.qld.gov.au

Rochedale South Neighbourhood Police Beat

890 Underwood Road

Rochedale South Qld 4123

07 3219 7850

Department of Communities, Child Safety Services

During normal business hours: 1800 811 810

After hours and on weekends: 1800 177 135

www.childsafety.qld.gov.au

In an emergency, dial '000



¹ **Note:** These details are correct at the time of publication.