

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Organisation Name: Waikirikiri Sports

Type of Sport: Hockey

Date of Policy: February 2017

Policy Statement:

This policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding the welfare of all children in our care. We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm and exploitation while participating in our activities. Committee members and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children. For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures, a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years. This policy supports our committee members and volunteers to respond appropriately to potential child protection concerns including suspected abuse or neglect and includes our protocols when child abuse is reported to us or suspected by us. This policy also includes information on the measures to be taken to prevent child abuse.

Any person may report suspected child abuse to an appropriate agency, e.g. Police or CYF. Contact Christchurch Police (03 363 6400) or CYF (0508 326 459) to discuss your concerns.

Club Child Protection Officer: Hannah Winter 0276636610 hannahwinter@hotmail.co.nz

Policy Principles:

In implementing this policy we are committed to the following principles:

1. the welfare of children is the primary concern;
2. all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socioeconomic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all
3. forms of harm;
4. child protection is everyone's responsibility;
5. children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so;
6. our organisation will work in partnership with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children

Policy Objectives

The aim of this policy is to promote good practice through:

1. promoting the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in sports safely;
2. respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children;
3. promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from harm;
4. recruiting, training, supporting and supervising committee members, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from harm and to reduce the risk of allegations or complaints against themselves;
5. requiring children, committee members, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures;
6. responding to any allegations of misconduct or harm to children in line with this Policy and these procedures, as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant investigative, disciplinary and appeals procedures;
7. regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this Policy and these procedures.

Definitions

- **Child protection** – activities carried out to ensure that children are safe in cases where there is suspected abuse or neglect or are at risk of abuse or neglect.
- **Child, Youth and Family** – the agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing care and protection to children found to be in need.
- **New Zealand Police** – the agency responsible for responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger and for working with Child, Youth and Family in child protection work and investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.
- **Physical abuse** – any acts that may result in physical harm of a child or young person. It can be, but is not limited to: bruising, cutting, hitting, kicking, shaking or injury caused by environmental conditions, unsafe equipment and/or facilities, poor technique or utilizing training methods which are inappropriate for the age and physiological development of the child.
- **Sexual abuse** – any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can be, but is not limited to:
 - **Contact abuse:** touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution.
 - **Non-contact abuse:** exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.
- **Emotional abuse** – any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning or development. This can include:
 - Undermining a child's self-esteem through patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorizing a child can also be emotional abuse.
 - Creating social harm through damaging the relationships that children have with other children and adults
 - Causing cultural harm which occurs when a child's beliefs or practices are not acknowledged or accepted
- **Neglect** – neglect is the obvious as physical abuse, it is just as serious. Neglect may include but is not restricted to:
 - Not providing the necessities of life like water, food and clothing
 - Neglectful supervision (failing to provide developmentally appropriate supervision leading to increased risk of harm).
 - Failing to provide medical care when necessary
 - Abandonment (leaving a child or young person in a situation without arranging necessary care for them and with no intention of returning)

PROCEDURES:

Code of Behaviour/Conduct:

These protocols provide guidance to those working with children by outlining good practice. The intention of these protocols is to reduce the likelihood of harm to a child as well as minimising the risk of an allegation or complaint being made.

Good practice amongst committee members, coaches, officials and volunteers means:

- 1. Applying a child-centered approach where all children are treated equally and with dignity**
 - activities should be appropriate for the age and development of the children involved
 - ensure feedback to children is about their performance and not of a personal nature
 - use positive and age-appropriate language when talking to children and in their presence.
 - refer and deal with concerns regarding safeguarding children according to the steps within this policy.
- 2. Creating a safe and open working environment that also reduces risk to committee members and volunteers**
 - exercise common sense
 - work in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication.
 - do not send children off to train alone and out of sight and supervision
 - ensure that children use appropriate protective gear
 - ensure that all physical contact with children is relevant and appropriate to the activity
 - seek permission to touch when doing the above
 - do not engage in any intimate, over-familiar or sexual relationships with people under the age of 18 years
 - ensure that any filming or photography of children is appropriate
 - explain the purpose and obtain consent (from parents/caregivers) prior to filming or photographing children
 - request parental consent before transporting children in a vehicle - ensure that the vehicle is insured and has a current Warrant of Fitness and registration
 - ensure you have parental consent to administer first aid if required.
 - do not use alcohol in the presence of children and do not offer alcohol to children
 - ensure that all electronic communication with children remains brief and relevant to the coach/athlete relationship or team administration. Ideally, communication should be between the coach and parent in the first instance.
 - do not allow parents, coaches, other children, or spectators to engage in any type of bullying behaviour (this includes cyber/text bullying)
 - do not engage in any bullying activity.
 - never reduce a child to tears as a form of control or deliberately do something to make someone feel diminished or embarrassed.
 - never use inappropriate language, or allow other children to use inappropriate language unchallenged (e.g. swearing, name calling/put downs, sarcasm, innuendo, sexualised connotations, culturally or racially offensive comments).

- never yell or shout at children as a reprimand or in response to anger.
- never make sexually suggestive comments or actions to, or in the vicinity of a child/young person, even in fun.
- never engage in rough, physically or sexually provocative games

3. Avoiding situations where you are alone with a child

- avoid private or unobserved situations, including being alone with a child in the changing rooms
- avoid entering changing rooms - if you must enter, knock and announce yourself and try to have at least one other adult with you
- avoid driving a child unaccompanied

Recruitment and Training Processes for Committee members and Volunteers:

It is important that the best effort is made to ensure that appropriate people are working with children in our sport. To ensure this happens we will ensure:

- All coaches (paid or unpaid) are vetted for their suitability to work with children/young people and must agree to a police check as part of the recruitment process.
- A Child Protection Officer will be appointed by the club for the purposes of providing advice and guidance to the club in relation to matters relating to the safety and wellbeing of children who access our services. The Child Protection Officer will be somebody who;
 - Has experience working with children
 - Demonstrates a history of considered decision making when dealing with sensitive and challenging scenarios
 - Can provide two referees that will be contacted by telephone.
 - Provides consent to undergo a police check
 - Agrees to undergo training for the role. The club will ensure the Child Protection Officer receives suitable training to ensure they are equipped with the skills necessary for this role.
 - Is able to maintain current knowledge with local and central government policy regarding Child Protection.
- Child Protection matters will form part of the training provided to coaches to ensure they are working safely and effectively with children and feel confident to identify and respond to any unacceptable behaviours or practices.
- The Child Protection Officer will keep a record of all those who have received this training. This training and a police clearance will be required to be completed at least every 3 years.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Committee members and volunteers should be aware that:
 - The Privacy Act 1993 and the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989 allow information to be shared to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated. Note that under sections 15 and 16 of the CYPF Act, any person who believes that a child has been, or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Child, Youth and Family or the Police and, provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.
- We encourage good communication with the Child Protection Officer, CYF/police to keep children safe. Requests for information from agencies such as CYF or the police should be referred directly to the Child Protection Officer, who is responsible for ensuring such requests are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Upon their request, information can or must be released to a CYF social worker, police officer or care and protection coordinator (Section 66 CYF Act).
- Release of information to others, outside of these categories, does not attract the same protection and therefore care is required when regarding such requests for information from third parties.

Handling situations where harm or abuse are suspected, witnessed, reported or disclosed:

- Ensure the child is safe from immediate harm
- LISTEN to the child and reassure them
- RECORD accurately and appropriately any information received/observed
- CONSULT immediately with the Child Protection Officer
- Do not formally interview the child or make any judgments or commitments you cannot keep. Discuss confidentiality and its exclusions and that you will need to tell someone else.
- Avoid questioning the child beyond what they have already disclosed.
- Record facts concisely including:
 - Type of harm
 - Signs and symptoms noted
 - Any particular incidents with dates, times and place
 - Any action taken
- REPORT your concern to CYF or the Police

Allegations or Concerns about Committee members or Volunteers

- We will ensure there is no contact between the committee member or volunteer and the child. Committee member or volunteer will be stood down while the matter is being investigated.
- If there is a need to pursue an allegation we will consult with Child, Youth and Family or the Police before advising the person concerned, informing them that they have a right to seek legal advice and providing them with an opportunity to respond.
- Following any investigation a debrief will be provided to the committee that includes decisions about the person's future role in the club and a review of how the situation was managed and what changes to policy or safeguards need to be made.
- If parents or committee members have concerns about the treatment of a child by a committee member or volunteer, they are encouraged to make these known to any committee member or the Child Protection Officer who will ensure that the matter is investigated and acted upon, using an adviser from outside the service if necessary.

Potential Disciplinary Outcomes:

Possible outcomes of the investigative process include:

- a satisfactory mediated outcome
- disciplinary action imposed for a breach of this policy such as written warnings; suspension of a person from a role they hold with the organisation; banning of a person from activities held by or sanctioned by the organisation; a direction to complete a reasonable task i.e. letter of apology or corrective action; referral of the matter to an appropriate authority i.e. CYP or Police.
- no action taken due to a finding of no breach of the policy or insufficient evidence
- action against the complainant (or other person) due to a finding of frivolous, vexatious or malicious allegation

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the committee 2018 or sooner if required for example following changes in relevant legislation or following issues or concerns that are raised about the safety of children in your care.