



DEER PARK FOOTBALL

Child Safe Policy

Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff, and volunteers of the Deer Park Football Club (DPFC) to child safety and to provide an outline of policies and practices DPFC have developed to keep everyone safe from harm.

Child Safety Mission Statement

The Deer Park Football Club is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care. We seek to promote and protect the rights of all children in our care and prevent abuse from occurring by fostering a child safe culture. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our priority and DPFC have a zero tolerance to child abuse.

Application of this policy

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation including, but not limited to:

- Administrators
- Coaches
- Officials
- Participants
- Parents
- Spectators

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

They must all:

- Understand the indicators and risks of child abuse
- Appropriately act on concerns raised by children
- Understand and follow applicable laws in relation to the protection of children
 - Report child safety concerns.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined as an act or omission by a parent, caregiver, other adult, or child that endangers or impairs a child's physical or emotional health and development.

Types of child abuse include: (as documented by AFL Vic – Child Safe Standards in Football)

- Physical abuse is intentionally causing or threatening to cause physical injury to a child, or inadvertently causing injury because of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment.
- Emotional abuse occurs when a person engages in inappropriate behaviours such as rejecting, ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening, or verbally abusing a child, or allowing others to do so.
- Sexual abuse is when any person uses their authority over a child to involve the child in any sexual activity
- Neglect means failing to meet a child's basic needs such as providing adequate food, drink, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene, or medical attention.
- Family violence occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home and can be very harmful. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.
- Grooming is the behaviours used to prepare a child with the intention of sexually abusing them. This includes building a trusting relationship with a child and sometimes their family, and can involve spending time alone with children. It graduates from attention-giving and non-sexual touching to increasingly intimate and intrusive behaviours.

Valuing Diversity

DPFC values diversity and does 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 and participation and empowerment of children from culturally and /or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.
- Welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation.
 - Recruiting staff and volunteers
- DPFC takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers:
 - Interview and conduct referee checks where relevant.
- Where Required police checks, all persons working directly with children require a Working with Children Check. <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>
 - Reporting a child safety concern or complaint.
- DPFC has appointed *Suellen Isherwood* as Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents, and children.

***DPFC** has a dedicated section on their website for Child Safety Information and for details of how to contact the Child Safety Officer.*

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 children.

To reduce the risk of abuse to children. Adults to whom the policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- Using changes room facilities
- Overnight accommodation
 - Travel
- Physical contact when coaching and managing children.