



 **True Sport**  
Child Safeguarding Initiative

# NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 3

Families and communities are informed and involved  
in promoting child safety and wellbeing



November 2023



## CONTENTS

- > [Fact Sheet 3.1](#)
- > [Fact Sheet 3.2](#)
- > [Fact Sheet 3.3](#)
- > [Fact Sheet 3.4](#)

[Click here](#) to view other True Sport Child Safeguarding resources.

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- > [Mental health community links](#)
- > [Reporting flowchart](#)

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### **Child Safeguarding**

*Child Safeguarding relates to the actions taken by organisations to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in its care, to protect them from harm.*

### **Child Safety Code of Conduct**

*A document that provides guidelines for everyone involved in organisations (including staff and volunteers and children and young people) to understand their expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.*

### **Children and young people**

*Those involved in your SSA who are under the age of 18 or fit into a youth category.*

### **National Principles**

*The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles) reflect the ten child safe standards (standards) recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and were endorsed by all Commonwealth, state and territory governments. The National Principles are the vehicle*

*for giving effect to recommendations relating to the standards. The National Principles aim to provide a nationally consistent approach to creating organisational cultures that foster safety and wellbeing.*

### **SSA**

*State Sport Association.*

### **Staff and volunteers**

*All people undertaking paid or unpaid work within your SSA.*

### **True Sport**

*True Sport provides a framework for a long-term sustainable approach to safeguarding, support and equip the sports industry from now and into the future. Its all about creating the environment for sport in WA that allows the industry to thrive and prosper for generations to come.*

### **Two-deep model**

*Adults involved in an SSA should 'copy in' a designated member of the organisation and a parent or carer when undertaking online communication with a child or young person.*

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## KEY ACTION AREA 3.1: Families participate in decisions affecting their child.

### OVERVIEW

It is important that SSAs provide families with an opportunity to participate in decisions affecting their children and young people. This will assist your SSA in creating a positive child safe culture and child safe environments that create better outcomes for all children and young people.

SSAs need to firstly seek input from **all** parents and carers about how they would like to be involved in the SSA and identify how, in a practical sense, they can participate in the decisions affecting their child or young person. Families and carers are often best placed to advise about the needs and capacities of their children or young people and can inform your SSA about practices and environments that are safe for them. It is important as part of this, to actively engage with all families who are part of your SSA, and for the SSA to be responsive to their needs.

Everyone within your SSA needs to play a role in keeping children and young people safe. Therefore, not only is it important for your SSA to implement the National Principles to enable a safe environment for children and young people, it is also vital for your SSA to inform everyone, including parents and carers, about what steps it is taking to achieve safe environments and involve them in decisions that impact their children and young people. For example, your SSA can:

- Inform parents and carers that child safety is a priority for your SSA ([see Factsheet 1.1](#)).
- Outline your SSA rules and expectations for staff and/or volunteers, as well as for children and young people ([see Factsheet 1.4](#)) and provide them with an opportunity for input when documents are reviewed and developed.
- Inform parents and carers about how they can raise a concern or disclosure within your SSA ([see National Principles 6 resources](#)). This information can be shared through website links; newsletter articles; social media posts; informal and formal discussions; and information sessions. This not only informs parents and carers, but also supports them to discuss safety and wellbeing with their child or young person, which should be encouraged.



<b>EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 3.1</b>	SSAs discuss with parents, carers and families how they would like to be involved in the SSA.
	Staff and volunteers are responsive to the needs of all families.
	Parents and carers are encouraged and supported to talk to their children and young people about safety and wellbeing within the SSA.

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## KEY ACTION AREA 3.2:

The SSA engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.

### OVERVIEW

It is important for your SSA to engage and openly communicate with families and the broader community about your child safe approach. This information needs to be accessible for all. If your SSA is unsure how to create accessible information for all, it is important to seek feedback and input from your families about their preferred modes of communication and, depending on what this feedback includes, seek guidance and support from external organisations or agencies about how to achieve this.

There are various ways your SSA can share information about its child safe approach. For example:

- Through its website and social media posts
- By involving parents, carers, families and the community in SSA activities and highlighting the child safe approach as part of this
- Through offering an open-door policy for parents, carers and families, to encourage a transparent culture
- Through regular engagement with families. This can enable two-way communication between your SSA and families, and also encourages families to provide any feedback and suggestions. This, in turn, will encourage a culture of open communication and respect and may increase the likelihood that families involved in your SSA will raise any concerns they may have about a child or young person.

If your SSA communicates both the steps it is taking to keep children and young people safe and the pathways parents, carers and families should take if they think a child has been or is being harmed, this will build confidence and satisfaction among existing members (as they will feel that children and young people will be more likely to be safe, in contrast to an organisation that does not prioritise safety and wellbeing). This will also assist with the retention of members.

Open and regular communication and promotion from your SSA about child safety and wellbeing may also contribute to deterring a potential perpetrator from targeting your SSA. It sends a clear message that the SSA has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of harm to children and young people and will take immediate action if harm does occur. SSAs should be aware, however, that they may still be targeted irrespective of whether or not they have implemented communication strategies. Despite this, open communication may be a sufficiently effective deterrent and may reduce the risk of harm to children and young people involved in your SSA.

If your SSA proactively and openly communicates with the general community about its child safe approach (for example through your website, through social media posts, through signage at competitions etc), your membership of children and young people is likely to increase, as parents and carers will be more likely to choose your SSA for their children and young people, rather than another organisation that is not openly prioritising child safety.

It is important for your SSA to keep records of its child safety communication to families and the community to demonstrate this has been achieved. This can be as simple as keeping a record of what communication occurred, who with and when.



<b>EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 3.2</b>	Provide regular information in a form and language that is accessible and appropriate, including information about the SSA's child safety policies, Child Safety Code of Conduct, and child friendly complaints processes.
	There are opportunities for parents, carers and community members to attend and participate in SSA activities.
	There is an open-door policy for parents/carers to visit training/competitions.
	The SSA keeps a record of its child safety communication to families and the community.

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## KEY ACTION AREA 3.3:

Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the SSA's policies and practices.

### OVERVIEW

It is important for families and communities to have a say in the development and review of your SSA child safety policies and practices. Your SSA can do this by actively inviting feedback from families through discussions, forums, meetings and surveys. Your SSA can also ask a nominated group of parents or carers to speak with others within the SSA community on your behalf, to seek input and bring their thoughts back for consideration. Relevant questions could be:

- What could be improved?
- How could your SSA work in more culturally appropriate ways?
- What do they like and dislike about your SSA?

It is important to seek the input of all families in the development and review of the SSA's policies and practices, but this can only be achieved if everyone is included. It is important, therefore, for your SSA to identify any barriers that may prevent involvement and where possible take steps to address these. Overcoming barriers to involvement could also include having a variety of ways that families can provide input such as: in person, in writing and through online surveys. Even if you are limited in your capacity to implement certain actions, it is useful to acknowledge that you have identified a particular barrier and that your SSA would like to address this, but does not yet have capacity to do so.

It is important for your SSA to reach out and seek support from other SSAs, external agencies, organisations or community leaders to develop culturally respectful practices. For example, there is a lot of rich and useful information available from the [National Office of Child Safety](#) about the cultural safety considerations of the implementation of the National Principles. This has been developed in partnership with SNAICC, the Australian national non-government peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, with contributions from the Victorian Child Care Agency.



<b>EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 3.3</b>	The SSA actively invites feedback from families.
	Barriers that may prevent parent, carer and/or community leader participation in the SSA are identified and actions taken to address these.
	SSAs establish connections with external agencies or community leaders who can support the SSA to develop culturally respectful practices.

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## KEY ACTION AREA 3.4:

Families, carers and the community are informed about the SSA's operations and governance.

### OVERVIEW

It is important that your SSA child safety and wellbeing policies and information are provided in accessible languages and formats to enable **all** families to access this vital information. If there are some families or carers who cannot access your information (because it is not in accessible formats or language, or openly available) they will not know:

- how your SSA is endeavouring to create a safe environment for children and young people
- your expectations of them and their children and young people
- how and where to report concerns if a child or young person is at risk of harm.

It is also important for SSAs to seek guidance as necessary from families, Elders, experienced people and/or agencies about the needs of children and young people with disabilities, complex needs or from culturally diverse backgrounds. It is important to remember that your SSA staff and volunteers **do not need to be experts** but your SSA needs to have a culture that encourages all people to seek guidance when needed to assist with the safe participation of children and young people. For example, it is important that your SSA encourages its staff and volunteers to know who within the SSA they can speak with if they feel a child or young person needs additional support. The person or people within your SSA who will be contacted for guidance, must also know where to go to seek assistance or support.



<b>EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 3.4</b>	<p>The SSA provides information on its child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and complaints processes in a format and language that is accessible.</p>
	<p>SSAs seek guidance as required from families, Elders, experienced people and/or agencies about the needs of children and young people with disabilities, complex needs and from culturally diverse backgrounds.</p>

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