True Sport

Child Safeguarding Initiative

NATIONAL PRINCIPLE 8

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed

CONTENTS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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

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

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.

The eSafety Commissioner
The eSafety Commissioner is Australia's independent regulator for online safety.

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.

If you need support:
› [Mental health community links](#)
› [Reporting flowchart](#)

[Click here](#) for the full disclaimer relating to True Sport Child Safeguarding documents.

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KEY ACTION AREA 8.1:

Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments, without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

OVERVIEW

It is important for your SSA staff and volunteers to identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environment without compromising a child or young person's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

As a starting point, your SSA needs to identify its highest risk settings for children and young people. This may include physical environments that are closed or segregated (such as overnight camps or inclusion programs) and online platforms to which children and young people have access (such as messaging groups or Facebook pages).

Your SSA is likely to have a variety of settings where children and young people participate, including:

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Coaching or official training
- Overnight camps
- Interstate travel
- Country week
- Inclusion programs
- Talent identification programs and initiatives
- Talented children and young people playing in senior teams (alongside adults)
- Internships
- Children and young people advisory groups.

ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

- Messaging platforms
- Social media platforms.

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Once these settings have been identified, the safety considerations for each risk need to be outlined, documented and then implemented (see Fact Sheet 1.5).

There also needs to be guidelines in place for SSA staff and volunteers about behavioural expectations to reduce risk for children and young people during activities such as toileting, showering and changing clothes. Inappropriate or harmful contact (physical or online) between children and young people should also be covered in the guidelines (see Fact Sheet 1.4 and Fact Sheet 7.2).

For further information about understanding harmful sexual behaviour between children and young people, the Department of Communities has information, resources and links available here.

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EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 8.1	Particular attention is given to the safety and diverse needs of children and young people in closed or segregated environments, such as overnight camps or inclusion programs.
	Guidelines are in place to reduce risk between adults and children and young people during activities such as toileting, showering and changing clothes, and in online environments. The risk of inappropriate or harmful contact between children and young people must also considered.

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> Mental health community links
> Reporting flowchart

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KEY ACTION AREA 8.2:
The online environment is used in accordance with the SSA's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.

OVERVIEW

It is important for your SSA's online environment to be used in accordance with its Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices (see National Principle 1 and National Principle 10 documents for more information).

This can be achieved by having guidelines in place for everyone within your SSA about expected behaviours in the online environment. These guidelines should be communicated regularly and implemented, and can include:

- Guidelines about the taking and storage of photos of children and young people

- Guidelines for your SSA staff and volunteers about communication with children and young people via personal phones, emails and social media

- Guidelines and education (or links to education resources) about cybersafety and online security for children and young people.

The eSafety Commissioner

has a lot of information, resources and training available about online safety.

See Template 8.2 for an introduction to this information.

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EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 8.2	Guidelines are in place about the taking and storage of photos of children and young people.
	Guidelines are in place for SSA staff and volunteers about communication with children and young people via personal phones, emails and social media.
	Guidelines and education (or links to education resources) are provided about cybersafety and online security for children and young people.
	The SSA requires staff and volunteers to read and acknowledge the above guidelines and creates regular opportunities to raise and discuss the guidelines with staff and volunteers.

If you need support:
› Mental health community links
› Reporting flowchart

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KEY ACTION AREA 8.2:
The online environment is used in accordance with the SSA's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.

OVERVIEW

It is important for your SSA to understand how to encourage child safe practices online and to take proactive steps to achieve this. The following provides an introduction of some considerations for your SSA around the online environment including:

- Understanding the importance of prioritising the online safety of children and young people
- Understanding the diversity of online platforms that your SSA interacts with and uses
- Being aware of the reporting pathways for online harm.

Importance of prioritising the online safety and wellbeing of children and young people:

Online harm can have a devastating impact on individuals involved in sport, including children and young people. It can affect people's wellbeing, mental health, confidence, relationships and sense of safety. Unsafe online environments are a risk to member enjoyment, wellbeing and the integrity of your sport, and can have a damaging impact on sport as a whole.

Team apps, messaging platforms, image-sharing and social media enable people involved with your SSA to connect, but they also come with a risk. Online harm in sport can involve participants, coaches, volunteers, officials, supporters, children and young people, or even the public. Any one of these groups can be the target of online abuse, or responsible for it.

Online abuse is behaviour that uses digital technology to threaten, intimidate, menace, bully, harass, humiliate or offend someone. It can happen on all types of online platforms and communication services. The harmful content could be a post, comment, text, message, chat, livestream, meme, image, video or email.

The eSafety Commissioner has information for young people on types of online issues.

You can learn more about serious types of online abuse from the eSafety Commissioner:

- Image-based abuse
- Cyberbullying of children
- Illegal and restricted content

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HOW CAN YOUR SSA CREATE SAFE ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS?

Although there are online safety risks that your SSA needs to be aware of, it is important to remember there are also many benefits of using technology, as long as this is done safely. Your SSA can take the following steps to enable safe online environments:

1. SET UP FOR SAFETY

It is important to regularly review security, privacy and safety settings on devices and platforms.

The following are helpful resources from the eSafety Commissioner:

- How to have safer online experiences
- Protect your personal information
- Safe device use
- Use of social media
- Get help with technology
- eSafety guide – for guidance on specific apps and platforms

2. KNOW YOUR SSA RULES

It is helpful for your SSA to have online safety-related policies. Each SSA will be different but online safety may be covered in policies such as:

- Codes of conduct
- Child safeguarding
- Member protection
- Complaints
- Social media

It's important to know that not all instances of online harm involve sport members as the perpetrator. Those responsible can be non-members or unknown sources. For example, a person may receive an abusive comment about a game via direct message to their personal social media from an unknown or anonymous account. Your SSA can still support members to respond and deal with issues such as this if it relates to sports participation.

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3. ONLINE COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Appropriate online communication with children and young people in sport is essential. This includes all interactions by adult coaches, officials, managers, administrators and other members.

Your SSA policies and procedures should explicitly set out expectations, rules and boundaries.
For example:

- **Adopt a two-deep model** - copy in your SSA and a parent/guardian in all electronic or online communication to children and young people.

- **Maintain boundaries on social media** – don't befriend children and young people.

- **Avoid sharing personal details** – including details of mobile numbers or communicating with young members and parents/carers using personal accounts.

- **Manage images** - never exchange personal images with members and avoid storing images of, or information about, members on personal devices.

4. MANAGE YOUR DIGITAL REPUTATION

It is important for your SSA to manage its digital reputation and consider what information is in the public domain. The following provides some considerations about sharing content:

Content to share:

- Great sporting moments
- Celebrations and congratulations of success
- Tips to improve practice and performance
- Inspiration for others
- Reposting and liking positive sporting content

Content to avoid

- Anything in the heat of the moment
- Liking or supporting negative online commentary
- Personal details or identifying information of you or others
- Negative, inflammatory or offensive statements
- Information about starting lineups and injuries, as it could be used in betting markets that you may not even be aware are available on your sport.

More information: <u>Digital reputation</u>

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5. ENCOURAGE REPORTING

It is important for your SSA to encourage staff, volunteers and members to support those who are targeted online by poor behaviour, bullying, abuse or hate. Reach out to the person being targeted straight away, support them and report the behaviour to your SSA.

6. PLAY IT FAIR ONLINE

It is important for everyone involved in the SSA to:

Be respectful - there's no place for abuse, hate or discrimination online.

Be kind - treat people with kindness, patience and understanding online.

Ask for help - everyone needs support. Reach out if something goes wrong online.

Be responsible - think how your actions could affect other people.

DEALING WITH ONLINE HARM:

It is important to follow your SSA policies in managing online harm (see National Principle 6 resources including Template 6.4)

The eSafety Commissioner can help deal with harm caused by serious online abuse or illegal and restricted online content.

- Reporting to eSafety

- What you can report to eSafety

For more information, visit:

- Image-based abuse

- Cyber bullying of children and young people

- Illegal and restricted content

⤓ View Fact Sheet 8.2

⤓ View Template 6.4

If you need support:
› Mental health community links
› Reporting flowchart

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KEY ACTION AREA 8.3:
Risk management plans consider risks posed by SSA settings, activities and the physical environment.

OVERVIEW

It is important for risk management plans to consider risks posed by your SSA settings, activities and the physical environment.

Strategies need to be adapted for your different SSA settings and the particular needs of children and young people involved in your SSA (refer to Fact Sheet 1.5). It is essential that visibility by staff and volunteers of children and young people is considered in the planning of activities. If visibility of children and young people is poor during activities, it is essential to have other practices in place or strengthened to enable children and young people to be safe.

It is important that access to children and young people is actively monitored within all of your SSA activities. For example, your SSA will have different risk management strategies in place if you are running a training session for children and young people in a private sports venue which has lockable entrances and exits, as opposed to holding a training session in a public venue, where the general public has full access to the space.

The intention of the National Principles is to create safer environments for children and young people by considering risks associated with activities and taking action to mitigate those risks. The National Principles are not designed to stop activities that have risk, rather they can help people be aware of risks and take action to mitigate them where possible. For example, although there is more risk that a stranger will seek to engage a child or young person in a public space (whether this be inside or outside) there is still risk involved while training in a private space. Mitigation strategies are important in all settings.

Furthermore, activities that occur away from your SSA usual environments (such as interstate travel or national competitions) need to be planned to take into account the physical environment. It is important to have clear procedures and guidelines for your SSA staff and volunteers to assist in managing activities such as toilet breaks, changing clothes and personal care and in environments such as dorm rooms. Not only is this important for the safety of children and young people, it also enables your SSA staff and volunteers to avoid situations where there may be a perception of inappropriate behaviour, even if that is not the case.

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EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 8.3	Visibility of children and young people has been considered and activities planned accordingly, or other practices strengthened.
	Access to children and young people in the SSA's environments is actively monitored.
	Procedures and guidelines are in place for managing toilet breaks, changing clothes and personal care.

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› Mental health community links
› Reporting flowchart

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KEY ACTION AREA 8.4:
SSAs that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that acknowledge the safety of children and young people.

OVERVIEW

If your SSA contracts facilities and/or services from third parties, it is important to have procurement policies in place that encourage the third party to have strategies and actions in place to protect the safety of children and young people involved. It is then essential to implement these policies.

Here are some examples of the steps your SSA may take to achieve this:

- Include the implementation of National Principles and child safe practices in all contracts and develop mechanisms to check this is occurring. Your SSA can assist with this by sharing the steps it is taking to implement the National Principles and the expectations for all staff, volunteers, families, children and young people (for example by sharing your SSA's Child Safety Code of Conduct and policies and procedures).

- Request all contracted organisations have a child-focused complaints system in place and that they report any complaints they receive to your SSA.

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EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 8.4	Contracts specify implementation of the National Principles and child safe practices.
	Contracted agencies have child-focused complaints systems and report to the SSA on complaints received.

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› Mental health community links
› Reporting flowchart

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