



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY	Document No:	BSAPL# 1.12
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Responsible Officer: Cameron Loftus	Version No	001
Authorising Officer:		Chief Executive Officer

1. PURPOSE

The Barwon Sports Academy (BSA) is fully committed to protecting children in its relationship with staff, athletes, affiliates, contractors and volunteers within the academies environments. The Academy aims to provide a safe and healthy working environment through a culture of accountability and openness.

2. SCOPE

BSA membership is predominately athletes under the age of 18 years. These children work with coaches, service providers and a number of other parties to develop their skills and understanding. The BSA is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

This document will provide a framework for Barwon Sports Academy (BSA) in protecting the children within our membership.

Everyone working at the Barwon Sports Academy is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

3. REFERENCES

BSA Child Safety Code of Conduct

4. BSA POLICY

Aims:

1. To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Barwon Sports Academy.
2. To work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
3. To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
4. To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/consultants as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation.
5. To provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/consultants forbidding any such abuse.
6. To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

Commitment:

1. The Barwon Sports Academy is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of children involved in its programs.
2. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.
3. Barwon Sports Academy has zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working at Barwon Sports Academy is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.
4. Child protection is a shared responsibility between the Barwon Sports Academy, all employees, workers, consultants, associates, and members of the Barwon Sports Academy community.
5. Barwon Sports Academy supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers. Barwon Sports Academy is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.
6. If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

Implementation:

The **Board** of Barwon Sports Academy has ultimate responsibility for the application and enforcement of this policy and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place.

The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures.

The **CEO** of Barwon Sports Academy is responsible for:

- Dealing with investigating and referring reports of child abuse where applicable;
- Ensuring that all staff, consultants, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all adults within the Barwon Sports Academy community are aware of their obligation to report suspected abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all staff, consultants and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe this Policy;
- Providing support for staff, consultants and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All **Coaches / Managers** must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate / minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Educate assistant coaches / volunteers about the prevention and detection of child abuse; and
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.

Management should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

All **staff / assistant coaches / volunteers / consultants** share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and Barwon Sports Academy's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and / or the state-based child protection service) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters;
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a responsible person in the organisation); and
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

5. Definitions

Appendix 1

Child means a person below the age of 17 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Child protection means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

Child abuse means all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child.

Child sexual assault is any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually abusive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes child grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.

Reasonable grounds for belief is a belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- (a) The child is in need of protection,
- (b) The child has suffered or is likely to suffer "significant harm as a result of physical injury",
- (c) The parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed if:

- a) A child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- b) A child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- c) Someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- d) Professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; and/or

Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

Appendix 2

Employment of New Personnel

Barwon Sports Academy undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers and volunteers which aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share the Barwon Sports Academy's values and commitment to protect children; and
- Prevent a person from working at Barwon Sports Academy if they pose a risk to children.

Barwon Sports Academy requires all workers/volunteers to pass through the organisation's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement.

Barwon Sports Academy may require applicants to provide a police check, VIT registration, Working With Children Check in accordance with the law and as appropriate, before they commence working at Barwon Sports Academy and during their time with Barwon Sports Academy at regular intervals.

Once engaged, workers/volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy.

Appendix 3

Risk Management

Barwon Sports Academy will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach.

Appendix 4

Reporting

Any staff member, volunteer or consultant who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the BSA CEO and the appropriate child protection service or the police.

In situations where the supervisor is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the next highest level of supervision.

Mandated Reporters:

State	Legislation	Mandated reporters	When must a report be made?	Who is a child?
Victoria	Child Youth and Families act 2005 [Vic]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registered medical practitioners, midwives & registered nurses Teachers registered or granted permission to teach under the Education, Training and Reform act 2006 Principals police 	<p>A mandated reported must make a report if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse The parents cannot or will not protect the child; and The belief is formed in the course of practising his/her profession of employment <p>NB: Exceptions may apply</p>	A person under 17 years of age

Voluntary Reporters:

State	Legislation	Voluntary reporters	When must a report be made?	Who is a child?
Victoria	Child Youth and Families act 2005 [Vic]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A voluntary reporter may make a report if the person has a significant concern for the well-being of a child. 	A person under 17 years of age

Making a Report

State	Relevant Body		Contact details
Victoria	Department of Health & Human Services	North-west rural & regional	1800 675 598
	After Hours and to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child:	Child Protection Crisis line	13 12 78
	Victoria Police – Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team [SOCIT]	Western Victoria	[03] 5448 1420

Appendix 5

Investigating

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to conduct an investigation of this report, all employees, consultants or volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the CEO will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the CEO may decide to conduct such an investigation. All employees, consultants and volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The CEO will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time other members of staff may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

After an initial review and a determination that the suspected abuse warrants additional investigation, the CEO shall coordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and / or law enforcement officials. Internal or external legal representatives will be involved in the process, as deemed appropriate.

Appendix 6

Responding

If it is alleged that a member of staff, consultant or a volunteer may have committed an offence or have breached the organisation's policies or its Code of Conduct the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an investigation is conducted.

If the investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities an offence (or a breach of the organisation's policies or Code of Conduct) has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal or cessation of involvement with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

Appendix 7

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. Barwon Sports Academy will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

Everyone is entitled to know how the personal information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will be able to access it.

6. ATTACHMENTS

Nil