

Safety of Children Policy

Child Protection

RYCV is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people associated with our sport. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

RYCV acknowledges that our staff, members and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport. RYCV aims to continue this and to take measures to protect the safety and welfare of children participating in our sport by following the policy guidelines as prescribed following.

1. Identify and Analyse Risk of Harm

RYCV will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe and child-friendly the organisation is and to determine what additional strategies are required to minimise and prevent risk of harm to children because of the action of an employee, volunteer or another person.

2. Develop Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

The RYCV will ensure that the organisation has codes of conduct that specify standards of conduct and care when dealing and interacting with children, particularly those in the organisation's care. The organisation will also implement a code of conduct to address appropriate behaviour between children.

The code(s) of conduct will set out professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behaviour. (See Codes of Conduct under Policies and Member Protection)

3. Choose Suitable Employees and Volunteers

The RYCV will ensure that the organisation takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in prescribed positions).

This may be achieved using a range of screening measures. Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

RYCV will ensure that working with children checks/criminal history assessments are conducted for employees and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law.

Our club has a duty of care to all those associated with our club. As a requirement of our Member Protection Policy, we require a working with children check for all persons who undertake any work, coaching or regular unsupervised contact with people under the age of 18 years

A **register** of all current certified volunteers and staff will be maintained by the Club. All staff members are required to have Working With Children Certification.

4. Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

The RYCV will ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children or their records have ongoing supervision, support and training such that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child-safe environment.

5. Empower and Promote the Participation of Children in Decision-Making And Service Development

The RYCV will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.

6. Recruiting staff and volunteers

The Club takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers:

- Interview and conduct referee checks on_ all staff and volunteers
- Require police checks and Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements and as part of the induction process for new staff or volunteers.
- Child Safer Organization

7. Supporting staff and volunteers

The Club seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

8. Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The Club has appointed Susan Weber and Damian Purcell as Child Safety Persons with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children. These people can be contacted by email or phone with the below contact information. Our complaints process is outlined in Member Protection Policy Item 9.2 and, if required, in the Club Rules as Disciplinary Procedure Part 3(Div 2) and Grievance procedure, Part 3 (Div 3).

Susan Weber: Phone 0417359708

Email: smwebber@bigpond.net.au

Damian Purcell: Phone 0400594807

Email: dfjp@unimelb.edu.au

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

- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- travel; or
- Physical contact when coaching or managing children.

10. Report and Respond Appropriately To Suspected Abuse and Neglect

The RYCV will ensure that volunteers and employees are able to identify and respond to children at risk of harm.

The RYCV will make all volunteers and employees aware of their responsibilities under respective state laws if they have suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

In addition to any legal obligation, if any person feels another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child or is breaching the code'(s) of practice set out they may make an internal complaint. Please refer to our complaints procedure outlined in this policy. This will explain what to do about the behaviour and how the RYCV will deal with the problem.

11. Supervision

Members under the age of 16 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. Our club will provide a level of supervision adequate and relative to the members' age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience, nature of activity and nature of venue. If a member finds a member under the age of 16 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the member's safety until the parent/guardian or supervisor can be found. Parents must turn up on time to collect their child for reasons of courtesy and safety. If it appears a member will be left alone at the end of a training session with just one child, they will ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

12. Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from club activities (e.g. practice and regattas). Where our club makes arrangements for the transportation of children (e.g. for away or overnight trips), we will conduct a risk assessment that includes ensuring vehicles are adequately insured, the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and appropriate safety measures are available (e.g. fitted working seatbelts)]

13. Taking Images of Children

The club requires that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used. We also require the privacy of others to be respected and disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

If the club uses an image of a child it will avoid naming or identifying the child or it will, wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname. We will not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian. We will not display information about hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc as this information can be used as grooming tools by paedophiles or other persons. We will only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to our sport and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport, displays its successes, etc.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

The following information was updated in April 2012. It is subject to change at any time.

VICTORIA

The Working With Children Check ("WWC Check") creates a mandatory minimum checking standard across Victoria. The Working with Children Act 2005 requires that some people who work or volunteer in child-related work require a WWC Check. WWC Checks are valid for five years and must be renewed if you intend to continue to undertake 'child-related work' after your WWC Check Card expires. Should you require a WWC Check Card you must have applied for a WWC Check Card by the 30th of June 2011.

The check involves a national police records check and a review of relevant findings from prescribed professional disciplinary bodies (currently only the Victorian Institute of Teaching). There is an exemption for volunteers whose own children are involved in the particular activity; however they should still be required to complete the screening process.

A person who has no criminal or professional disciplinary history will be granted an Assessment Notice. This notice will entitle the person to undertake child-related work in Victoria and is valid for five years (unless revoked). As of the 1st of December, 2010 the Assessment Notice became the WWC Check Card and not the A4-Style Assessment Notice. Cardholders can now show employers and organisations who employ them in 'child-related work', the card itself, as legal proof that they have passed the Check. A person deemed unsuitable to work or volunteer with children will be given a negative notice and cannot work in child-related work in Victoria.

Card holders do not need to apply for a new WWC Check Card when they change their employer or volunteer organisation, unless they are moving from volunteer status to paid work status. People under 18 years of age do not require a WWC Check Card. Police Checks can also be obtained via Victoria Police at <http://www.police.vic.gov.au/>

For more information: Visit: www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren; or Call: 1300 652 879

