

VERMONT JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers of the Vermont Junior Football Club (VJFC) to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices the VJFC has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

Child Safety Mission Statement

The VJFC is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and well-being 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 the VJFC has a zero tolerance to child abuse. VJFC will provide football to children and young people and will present environments and experiences that always consider and put measures in place to ensure the safety of children.

Application of this Policy

This policy was developed by the VJFC and in collaboration with staff, and volunteers.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) 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 any concerns raised by children; and
- understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.

Child Abuse

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child, and these are circumstances that the VJFC is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

VERMONT JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

The VJFC encourage children to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children and families who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them. We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concern's children, or their parents, raise with us.

Valuing Diversity

We value diversity and do 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, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from LGBTI+ backgrounds and their families;
- welcome children with disability and their families and act to promote their participation;
- seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds;
- address all instances of racism with appropriate consequences.

Recruiting staff and volunteers

VJFC take 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.
- All third party employers will be screened upon employment.

Supporting staff and volunteers

VJFC seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision, so people feel valued, respected, and fairly treated. We support our staff and volunteers through ongoing training to develop their skills to protect all children from abuse. 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 (see VJFC Child Safety Code of Conduct).

VERMONT JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The VJFC has appointed Cathie Johns as Child Safety Person with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents, or children, and can be contacted by phone 0421 322 332. All complaints will be taken seriously and responded to promptly. The VJFC will co-operate with law enforcement agencies as required.

Risk Management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to preventing, identifying, and mitigating 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. Adults should also be cautious when engaging with children in the online/social media environment. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- travel;
- physical contact when coaching or managing children; or
- social media, videos, photos or other chat services such as Facebook or WhatsApp

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed every year and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers involved in the VJFC and the Eastern Football Netball League.

VERMONT JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Child Safety Reporting Process

