



Westside Suns Basketball Club

Child Protection & Safety Policy

1. Commitment to Child Safety

Westside Suns Basketball Club (WSBC):

- is committed to ensuring **all Children and Young People are safe, happy, and empowered**;
- has **zero tolerance for child abuse or harm to Children and Young People**, and we are committed to ensuring that all allegations and safety concerns are treated **seriously and promptly**. We follow both **legal and moral obligations** to contact authorities when a Child or Young Person's safety is at risk.
- is committed to **preventing abuse, identifying risks early, and reducing those risks**; and;
- recognises the particular needs of **Aboriginal Children and Young People, including the need for cultural safety** as well as Children and Young People from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds or who have disabilities;
- considers the safety and wellbeing of all Children and Young People involved in the WSBC to be a **shared responsibility** between WSBC, parents, carers, spectators, coaches, volunteers and other members of the WSBC community; and
- is committed to implementing child safe practices in accordance with the **Victorian Child Safe Standards**.

2. Application and Purpose

This policy applies to:

- All WSBC programs, including junior domestic teams, skills clinics, and grassroots programs.
- Everyone involved with the WSBC, including, but not limited to, coaches, volunteers, parents, carers, committee members, volunteers and Children and Young People.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Educate and inform all people involved with the WSBC of their **responsibilities** when interacting with Children and Young People at the WSBC;
- Provide children with **appropriate safety and protection** while in Westside Suns Basketball Club care;
- Prevent abuse wherever possible;



- Set out processes to ensure allegations are handled **swiftly and appropriately; and**
 - Enable staff and volunteers to respond **confidently and correctly** to child protection issues.
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3. Children's Rights and Participation

Children and Young People are **active participants** in the WSBC. The Club will:

- Listen to their views and respect their opinions;
 - Promote **diversity, inclusion, and tolerance;**
 - Ensure children with a disability can participate equally; and
 - Promote the **cultural safety, participation, and empowerment** of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
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4. Promoting Good Practice and Codes of Conduct

- All persons to whom this Policy applies must comply with the **Westside Suns Basketball Club Codes of Conduct.**
 - It is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to determine if abuse has occurred; however, they **must identify poor practice and report concerns.**
 - Guidance on identifying good practice versus poor practice is provided in WSBC resources.
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5. Identifying and Managing Risk of Harm

- The WSBC recognises the importance of **identifying and managing risks to Children and Young People** and will implement a risk management plan to address risks.
 - The risk management plan will be **updated on a regular basis** in consultation with staff, volunteers, parent representatives and Children and Young People to ensure it is fit for purpose.
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6. Standards of Behaviour

All persons to whom this policy applies must:

- **have read and must follow** this Policy;
 - **understand** the definitions of Child Abuse and Harm;
 - **cause no Harm to a Child or Young Person and not engage in any form of Child Abuse;**
 - **value equity and diversity** and treat all Children and Young People at the WSBC with respect regardless of their race, religion, age, disability cultural background or gender, sexual orientation or family/social background; and
 - **fully co-operate with any investigation** by the WSBC and with any police and/or other formal investigations of any allegation related to Child Abuse or a Harm to the best of their ability.
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7. Complaints and Reporting

- WSBC will take all concerns and complaints of Child Abuse or Harm **seriously and will respond to them promptly** and confidentially, subject to compliance with relevant legislative requirements.
 - WSBC will **maintain a complaint handling policy** and make that policy available online to help Children and Young People and other persons to understand how they can raise a concern or a complaint with WSBC.
 - Persons to whom this policy applies must **notify the WSBC as soon as possible** if they observe or have grounds to reasonably believe that Child Abuse or Harm may be occurring in respect of any Child or Young Person at the WSBC.
 - If there is a **serious concern for the immediate safety** of a Child or Young Person, the **police should be called** and the **WSBC** notified as soon as possible. In any instance where a person who believes on reasonable grounds that a Child or Young Person at the WSBC may be subject to Child Abuse or Harm is in need of protection from any form of Child Abuse or Harm, the WSCB encourages that person to make contact with the police.
 - Any WSBC staff member, committee member, coach, volunteer or Child or Young Person who is the subject of a Child or Young Person related concern or complaint may be requested **to stand down from their position in the WSBC or suspend participation in any program** during an investigation or have their duties altered so they do not engage with Children and Young People.
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8. Club Welfare Officer

- Westside Suns Basketball Club will appoints a **Club Welfare Officer** as the primary contact for child safety matters
- Reports are treated **confidentially**, to the extent possible, and the reporter's identity is protected
- The Club Welfare Officer will escalate matters to **Basketball Victoria or relevant authorities** as required

Contact: childwelfare@westsidesuns.com

9. Screening and Recruitment

- WSBC will seek to implement **appropriate screening practices** that seek to reduce the risk of Harm or Child Abuse to Children and Young People (eg: by only recruiting or permitting volunteer participation by people who have provided evidence that they hold a Working with Children Check or other State equivalent and/or Police checks).
 - WSBC encourages applications from **Aboriginal peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and people with disabilities**
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10. Fair and Just Procedures, Record Keeping and Disclosure

- Westside Suns Basketball Club ensures that all personnel decisions are **made in accordance with the rules of procedural fairness**.
 - Allegations and investigations will be **recorded** and in accordance with **confidentiality requirements** under relevant legislative requirements.
 - Children and families will be informed of progress and outcomes.
 - WSBC may **share relevant information** to promote the safety and wellbeing of Children and Young People where appropriate and in their best interest. This may include sharing information with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise the safety of a Child or Young Person.
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11. Legislative Responsibilities

Westside Suns Basketball Club complies with all legal obligations, including:

- **Failure to disclose:** Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse;
 - **Failure to protect:** Responsibility of those in authority to act if a child is at risk; and
 - **Mandatory reporting:** Relevant personnel must report concerns to child protection authorities.
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12. Review

- This policy is reviewed **every two years** and after significant incidents; and
 - Families, children, and community members are encouraged to **provide feedback**.
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13. Definitions

In this Policy:

Children and Young People (or Child and Young Person) means a person under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse includes all forms of physical, emotional, psychological, verbal and/or sexual abuse. Child abuse also includes sexual exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, grooming, harassing behaviour, bullying or other exploitation of a Child or Young Person and includes any actions that results in actual or potential Harm to a Child or Young Person.

Grooming is means when a perpetrator builds a relationship with a child or young person with the intent to abuse or harm them.

Harm can be any action that may have a significant impact on a child or young person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

14. Policy Approval

Approved by: Westside Suns Basketball Club Committee

Date: 24/10/2025

Next Review: 18/10/2027