



# Western Australian Flying Disc Association Inc.

## Child Protection Policy

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## POLICY DEFINITIONS AND IMPACT

### WAFDA

- The Western Australian Flying Disc Association

### CHILD / YOUTH

- A child or youth is defined as someone under the age of 18 years.

### CHILD SEXUAL MALTREATMENT

- Is a criminal offence
- Occurs when a child has been exposed to, or subjected to, sexual behaviours or acts which are exploitative and/or inappropriate to his or her developmental level.
- Involves a wide range of sexual activities which exploit children and includes forcing, tricking, bribing, threatening or pressuring a child into sexual activity.

### RESULTANT HARM TO THE CHILD

- Includes significant emotional trauma, physical injury or impaired development, although harm may not always be easily identifiable.

In some cases a fine line exists between what is and what is not sexual maltreatment. In these cases careful consideration of the contextual element of the power relationship is essential, including the respective ages and developmental levels of those involved and the nature of the relationship.

## CHILD PROTECTION LEGISLATION

The protection of children from abuse and neglect is legally the responsibility of both the Family and Children's Services and the Police departments, under the Child Welfare Act 1947 and Community Services Act 1972

The key responsibilities of these agencies include reporting and investigating cases of child abuse and providing for the protection of victims. However, "all individuals and organisations which have regular contact with children, including families, have a responsibility for the welfare of those children. The responsibility cannot be confined to those organisations with specific legislative obligations for their care and protection" (The Wood Royal Commission, 1997). Unlike New South Wales, Western Australia does not have mandatory reporting legislation. Therefore, WAFDA is not compelled to advise on suspected cases of child sexual maltreatment. However, in the best interests of the child concerned and within a 'duty of care', the WAFDA will refer suspected cases to Family and Children's Services.

## DO YOU SUSPECT ABUSE?

If you suspect that a child or youth is a victim of abuse from a WAFDA member, you should:

- Make direct and confidential contact with a member of the WAFDA Committee.
- Consult with them on how to proceed and to make a formal report.

- Anonymous claims of abuse or breaches of the Code of Conduct and policies are to be taken seriously and must be immediately reported to the WAFDA Committee for investigation.

### **OPTIONS FOR FURTHER ACTION BY WAFDA**

When a claim of abuse is raised with the WAFDA committee, the Committee at their discretion may take some or all of the following actions:

- The suspected victim and other family members may be asked to approach their local GP to obtain a referral to professional support services and medical specialists.
- Report the matter to the Child Abuse Unit (WA Police Service)
- Report the matter to Family and Children's Services
- Consider suspension or cancellation the perpetrator's membership.

It is important to note that there are occasions where the Child Abuse Unit need to be called in as soon as possible in order that evidence is not tainted, accused are not tipped off and stories corroborated, etc. before the police arrive.

The Child Abuse Unit is quick to sort out the frivolous allegations from the serious, saving everyone a lot of hassle. You have suspicion on reasonable grounds:

- When a youth tells you they have been abused.
- When someone else tells you a youth has been abused.
- A youth tells you they know someone who has been abused (often they are referring to themselves).
- You observe a youth member's behaviour and/or injuries etc, and your knowledge of youth members, leads you to suspect abuse.
- You observe a member's abuse of another member.

### **WHAT TO DO**

If you suspect a child has been abused, follow these procedures:

- Ensure the youth is safe (if they are in your care).
- Maintain the safety of other youth members in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
- Obtain and document the following:
  - the youth's name, age and address
  - your reason for suspecting abuse (ie. observation, injury, information)
  - your assessment of danger posed to the youth including information pertaining to the alleged perpetrator
  - what arrangements, if any, exist for the immediate protection of the youth
  - what involvement, if any, other agencies have in dealing with the suspected member protection issues.

## **MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT**

1. The WAFDA is committed to providing an environment that is safe for participation in Flying Disc Sports. The WAFDA will not abide the criminal act of child sexual maltreatment, which occurs when a child (defined as a person under the age of 18 years) has been exposed or subjected to sexual behaviours or acts which are exploitative and/or inappropriate to his or her developmental level. Such behaviour involves a wide range of sexual activities which exploit children and includes forcing, tricking, bribing, threatening or pressuring a child into sexual activity.
2. This Child Protection Policy conveys a message to all members and prospective members, responsible for Flying Disc Sports activities, particularly those involving members under 18 years of age, about minimising risk exposure. Managers, coaches, officials, leaders, trainers and

management personnel, have a responsibility to provide safeguards dedicated to the well-being of those under the age of 18 years (youth).

3. The abuse of youth members, by WAFDA members or by external sources, is not acceptable and WAFDA encourages all incidents of such abuse as described above to be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

The WAFDA endorses the following Code of Conduct for those responsible for activities involving persons under the age of 18. As a member you should meet the following requirements in regard to your conduct during Flying Disc Sports activities.

### **A Manager will:**

- Agree to abide by the code of conduct.
- Be responsible for the overall welfare and well-being of team members and officials when travelling with a team.
- Maintain a 'duty of care' towards team members and an accountability for the management of the team.

### **A Coach/Trainer will:**

- Agree to abide by the code of conduct
- Be responsible for matters concerning the coaching, training and development
- Maintain a 'duty of care' towards others and an accountability for matters relating to training and competition
- Ensure that any physical contact with others is:
  - appropriate to the situation
  - necessary for the persons skill development
- Provide a safe environment for training and competition.

### **An Official/Administrator will:**

- Agree to abide by the code of conduct.
- Be fair, considerate and honest with others.
- Operate within the rules of the WAFDA.
- Be professional in your actions. Your language, presentation, manner and punctuality should reflect high standards.
- Resolve conflicts fairly and promptly through established procedures.
- Maintain strict impartiality.
- Maintain a safe environment for others.
- Show concern and caution towards others.

## PROTECTIVE MEASURES

The protective measures below apply to those members who undertake the delivery or supervision of youth activities in their capacity as managers, coaches, trainers, officials, administrators, etc. These are responsible positions in the organisation and as such must adopt the following risk minimisation measures to protect themselves from any misconceptions about their behaviour in performing their designated roles.

1. Do not engage, or allow others to engage, in any of the following:
  - abusive initiation ceremonies
  - sleeping in closed quarters with youths without a second adult representative, parent, etc.
  - aggressive, physically distressing or sexually provocative activities

- sexually suggestive comments about or to a youth
  - inappropriate or intrusive touching of a youth.
2. Maintain an open door policy when conducting briefings, meetings and assemblies of members. Invite all youths, parents, friends and other leaders to participate, particularly when performing interviews, transporting youth members and conducting excursions.
  3. Male and female adults or parents, must accompany youths when undertaking Flying Disc Sports activities away from home and especially overnight.

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The organisation's members, youth and adult, reserve certain rights as members and carry with them certain responsibilities.

<p><b>YOUTHS</b> <b>have the right to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be safe;</li> <li>• be listened to;</li> <li>• be respected;</li> <li>• privacy;</li> <li>• take calculated risks in a protective environment;</li> <li>• to an inclusive environment;</li> <li>• to be referred to professional help if needed;</li> <li>• to be protected from abuse by other members or outside sources.</li> </ul>	<p><b>MEMBERS</b> <b>have the right to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to ongoing training and information on all aspects of leading/managing activities for youths, particularly member protection;</li> <li>• support in the reporting of suspected abuse;</li> <li>• access to professional support services;</li> <li>• be protected from abuse by youths, other adult members and parents.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ORGANISATION</b> <b>has the right to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expect all members to comply with its Code of Conduct;</li> <li>• expect all youth members to maintain standards of reasonable behaviour;</li> <li>• take appropriate action if members breach the Code of Conduct or organisation's Policy.</li> <li>• expect all members to undertake appropriate training when advised to;</li> <li>• expect all members not to abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually;</li> <li>• take appropriate action in the event of accusations;</li> <li>• acquire police checks relating to convictions in relevant areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>YOUTHS</b> <b>are responsible for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• showing respect to both youth and adult members</li> <li>• keeping themselves safe;</li> <li>• accurately reporting inappropriate behaviour or risky situations for youth members</li> </ul>	<p><b>MEMBERS</b> <b>are responsible for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fostering team work to ensure the safety of youth members in their care;</li> <li>• using appropriate team management behaviour;</li> <li>• responding to youth members' statements concerns about alleged abuse;</li> <li>• ensuring the rights and responsibilities of youth members are enforced;</li> <li>• reporting suspected abuse to the appropriate authority;</li> <li>• not abusing members physically, emotionally or sexually;</li> <li>• maintaining confidentiality about sensitive information as designated by the appropriate authority.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ORGANISATION</b> <b>is responsible for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing a safe environment for members;</li> <li>• providing ongoing training and information for members wide promotion this policy and procedures;</li> <li>• facilitating open discussion on child protection issues;</li> <li>• provide support to members who report accusations of abuse;</li> <li>• treating suspected abuse information confidentially;</li> <li>• taking appropriate action if members breach standards of reasonable behaviour or policies and regulations.</li> </ul>