

GDFNL Child Safety Commitment

1. Commitment Purpose

GDFNL is committed to providing a **safe and supportive environment for all children and young people** participating in football and netball activities. This policy outlines expectations and obligations to ensure children are protected from abuse and harm and to promote their well-being across all activities and environments.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All League officials, staff and volunteers
- Coaches, umpires, team managers and competition officials
- Players, parents/guardians and spectators
- Contractors engaged by the League

It applies at all times during GDFNL activities, including matches, training, events, travel and online interactions.

3. Policy Commitment

GDFNL acknowledges its duty to uphold the Victorian Child Safe Standards and embed child safety in governance, culture, practices and behaviour. We:

- Promote the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm
- Empower children to speak up and participate in decisions affecting them
- Ensure complaints and concerns are treated seriously and responded to promptly

4. Child Safe Standards – Key Principles

GDFNL commits to implementing strategies addressing the following principles (based on the Victorian Child Safe Standards):

Standard 1: Culturally Safe Environment

- Acknowledge and respect the unique identities and experiences of all children, including First Nations children and those from diverse backgrounds.

Standard 2: Leadership and Culture

- Embed child safety into all aspects of organisational culture, governance and decision-making.

Standard 3: Participation and Empowerment

- Support and encourage children to express their views and concerns in ways that are accessible to them.

Standard 6: Safe People and Practices

- Ensure all adults working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety values.
- All relevant adults must hold a valid Victorian **Working With Children Check (WWCC)** and be recorded in the League's register.

Standard 7: Child-Focused Complaints Handling

- Provide accessible, child-friendly and transparent processes for reporting and responding to complaints, disclosures or concerns.

Standard 9: Safe Physical and Online Environments

- Identify and manage risks in physical settings (grounds, change rooms, buses) and digital spaces to promote safety while respecting children's privacy.

Standard 10: Review and Improvement

- Regularly review this policy, practices and incidents to strengthen child safety outcomes.

Standard 11: Documented and Clear Procedures

- Ensure all child safety practices and procedures are documented, easy to understand and accessible to stakeholders.

5. Working With Children Checks (WWCC)

All adults (18+) in positions of responsibility must:

- Hold a current Victorian WWCC before engagement in League roles
- Report WWCC numbers upon registration with the League
- Update status with the League should their WWCC lapse or conditions change
- The League will maintain a WWCC register for monitoring compliance.

6. Code of Conduct

All persons covered by this policy must adhere to GDFNL's Child Safety Code of Conduct, which sets expected standards of behaviour when interacting with children. This includes:

- Treating children with respect
- Not engaging in any form of abuse, discrimination or bullying
- Reporting concerns or inappropriate conduct promptly
- Using appropriate language, boundaries and interactions at all times

(You may attach or reference a separate Code of Conduct document adapted from Netball Victoria's child safety code.)

7. Reporting and Responding to Concerns

GDFNL encourages reporting of all child safety concerns. If a concern is raised:

- They will be listened to, taken seriously, and treated confidentially
- Immediate action will be taken to ensure safety
- Incidents involving potential criminal behaviour must be reported to police and child protection authorities
- The League will support affected children, families and responders through the process

Process steps for reporting should be clearly documented as part of this policy and communicated to stakeholders.

8. Education and Training

GDFNL will provide:

- Child safety awareness information to all members
- Role-specific training for those in supervisory or authority positions
- Access to relevant resources to support understanding of expectations and obligations

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months, or sooner, if legislative changes, incident learnings, or best practice updates occur.

Notes & References

- This policy is aligned with Victorian Child Safe Standards.
- Netball Victoria resources outline supporting policies, codes of conduct and templates that can be referenced or adapted.
- Working With Children Checks are mandatory for adults in child-related roles.