

# Child Safe Standards

## DEVELOPING A CODE OF CONDUCT

### Overview

The Victorian Child Safe Standards require organisations that provide services for children (i.e. State Sport Associations and Sporting Clubs) to have a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children. A code of conduct can help you communicate appropriate behaviour by adults towards children in your organisation to help protect children from abuse. Your organisation may already have an existing code of conduct. You can use this resource, which includes a template code of conduct, to develop or review your organisation's code of conduct.

### Why Have a Code of Conduct?

One of the most effective ways to demonstrate your commitment to child safety and protect children from harm is to document behaviours that are acceptable and unacceptable within a Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct needs to use plain language and include examples of behaviour that are relevant to your sport. When staff, volunteers, parents and children are clear about expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other.

If people behave in ways that are unacceptable, the Code of Conduct enables the organisation to take action. If a person does not comply with the expected standard of behaviour, their behaviour should be discussed with them. Noncompliance can lead to disciplinary action being taken, which may result in the person being asked to leave the organisation.

Without a Code of Conduct, it can be very difficult to raise behavioural issues with staff and volunteers. If unacceptable behaviour continues, this can seriously compromise the safety of your environment. Swift and appropriate action must be taken when the Code is breached, otherwise people will continue to feel compromised or unsafe.

### Developing a Code of Conduct

Your organisation can utilise the template Code of Conduct provided to outline expected standards for appropriate behaviour with and in the company of children, including online conduct.

It should be adapted to fit your organisation and the activities you provide for children. You could use the template provided as a basis for developing a code of conduct, or use it to address any gaps in your existing code of conduct.

## Using a Code of Conduct

Your organisation may wish to use a code of conduct:

- As part of induction training for new members, staff and volunteers
- As part of refresher training for existing members, staff and volunteers
- As part of yearly registration for participants, coaches and officials
- To inform parents/carers and others involved with your sport about what behaviour they can expect from the organisation's leadership, staff and volunteers
- To support and inform organisational protocols and reporting procedures should breaches of the code be suspected or identified
- Include a reference to the code of conduct in job advertisements and contracts to ensure compliance
- Include a reference to the code of conduct in the induction process for anyone new to your organisation.

## Further Information

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## DISCLAIMER:

The information contained within this template document is general in nature. It should not be considered as a substitute for legal advice. Vicsport recommends sporting organisations develop a Child Safe Code of Conduct with the assistance of appropriate legal advisers.

*This resource is supported by the Victorian Government.*

*This document was developed utilising and adapting content from:*

*Commission for Children and Young People (2015), A guide for creating a child safe organisation 2.0*

*State Government of Victoria, Department of Health & Human Services (2015) An overview of the Victorian child safe standards*