

# KEEPING OUR SPORT SAFE

## – Our Parent Handbook

We want swimming to be fun, enjoyable and safe for all. The Safe Sport Framework is an essential part of Swimming Australia's proactive and preventative approach to safeguarding Children and Young People in our Sport and addressing inappropriate behaviour for all of us in swimming.

The Safe Sport Framework was introduced in swimming in July 2016 and replaces the Child and Member Welfare Policies and Procedures, as well as the previous versions of the Codes of Conduct. The key changes to the Safe Sport Framework include:

- The introduction of a Child Protection Commitment Statement;
- The introduction of a Code of Conduct for dealing with Children and Young People. This outlines higher standards of behaviour for all of us in swimming to safeguard our children;
- The consolidation of the general and role-specific Codes of Conduct for us all in swimming – whether members or general participants or spectators in swimming;
- The introduction of rigorous recruitment and screening requirements for staff, coaches and volunteers and administrators who may work with children and young people;
- The consolidation and simplification of our Complaints Procedures; and
- The Provision of guidance and advice for those referencing and using the Safe Sport Framework, as well as tools, resources and guides for Clubs, Members and participants in swimming.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone associated with Swimming Australia complies with the Safe Sport Framework and ask all people involved in swimming assist us in promoting the best practice policies, practices and procedures wherever possible.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in swimming to be aware of our responsibilities and expectations and to help safeguard each other and the children and young people involved in our sport.

## Safeguarding Children and Young People

Swimming Australia understands the importance of being a child safe organisation and safeguarding the most vulnerable people in our sport – our children and young people. Parents rely on Persons in Positions of Authority in swimming as “trusted persons” to look after, as well as positively develop their children. The introduction of new provisions in our Safe Sport Framework that specifically address expected behavioural standards in dealing with children and young people - as well as our Child Protection Commitment Statement - is testament to this. We encourage all Parents to read these documents on our Swimming Australia website

closely (see “Safe Sport”) as they are equally relevant for Parents in our sport, as they are for coaches, administrators and officials.

We call on all parents/carers (and other spectators) in swimming to:

- observe our Guidelines for Parents/Carers;
- when necessary, politely and respectfully remind others of their obligations under these guidelines;
- in the event of serious or ongoing breaches of these guidelines by another person, report the matter to a Person in Position of Authority at the Club or Event (eg, a club official or coach) so that appropriate action can be taken.

## **Our Guidelines for Parents/Carers**

The participation, safety and enjoyment of Children and Young People in Swimming Australia, Member Association and Club activities, programs, services or events are our primary considerations. As parents and carers your role is to support these outcomes by:

- encouraging your child’s participation in a positive manner;
- not engaging in behaviour that discriminates against any other person on the basis of gender, race, ability, colour, religion, language, politics or national or ethnic origin;
- not engaging in, or threatening to engage in, violent or physical confrontations with any other person;
- not encouraging or inciting swimmers to violence, or similar breaches of competition rules or spirit;
- expressing your support by cheering our swimmers and not engaging in behaviour designed to belittle, insult or intimidate others;
- never mocking or insulting participants – including our own – when they make a mistake or do not swim well;
- demonstrating good sportsmanship by respecting and acknowledging good results and/or behaviour by competitors;
- respecting and accepting the decisions of officials and not criticising or arguing about decisions during or after the event other than raising concerns through appropriate channels;
- not entering the swimming area, inclusive of pool, without appropriate authority; and
- following any directions of Swimming Australia, Member Association or Club staff or officials, including any request to modify your behaviour or to leave a facility following a breach of these guidelines.

Serious or ongoing breaches of these guidelines are not tolerated. Those who breach our guidelines risk being asked to leave the event and/or being prohibited from attending future events.

## Report Any Concerns

If at any time during your child's swimming experience you have concerns about the safety or welfare of any Child or Young Person in our Sport, please report your concerns immediately to an official of your Club such as a coach or administrator or a Club Member Protection Information Officer. For serious concerns such as criminal conduct or Child Abuse, please contact your Club and call Swimming Australia on (03) 9910 0700.

## INSURANCE

As a parent, it is important that you know what level of coverage is provided in the unlikely event of someone being injured around pool deck. Swimming Australia, in partnership with JLT Sport, is committed to ensuring quality ongoing protection for its members. For information on all insurance policies visit <http://swimming.jltsport.com.au>.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND CYBER BULLYING

The popularity of Social Media in recent years has led to the risk of children being targeted online by 'cyber bullies'. Swimming Australia works with the Australian Sports Commission, the Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association and Australian Swimmers Association, and other like-minded organisations to ensure all members are well versed on what is appropriate use of social media, and what is not. Additionally, Swimming Australia's Child Welfare Policy provides specific guidelines and Complaints Procedures relating to the welfare and wellbeing of all members in our sport.

### What is Cyber Bullying?

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying which takes place online through email, chat rooms, web pages and other online forums. Cyber Bullying is different as it can occur 24/7 and children can be targeted while at home, which makes it invasive and hard to escape. Cyber Bullying can involve distressing and harmful material for children and users aren't always aware of the consequences.

### What can you do as a Parent about Cyber bullying?

There are several things that you can do as a Parent if your child is subject to cyber bullying:

- Discuss the incident with your child, and assure them that you are able to help them.
- Encourage your child to disengage in the online forum where the bullying is occurring
- Report the incident to your child's swimming club and/or school immediately.
- Educate your child about cyber safety

- Work with your child to implement strategies to reduce the risk of online harassment or bullying.
- Remember that all members of Swimming Australia are bound by the Safe Sport Framework.

For more information on Swimming Australia's Safe Sport Framework, please see the Policies, Procedures and Rules section of [swimming.org.au](http://swimming.org.au). For further information on social media and cyber bullying please see [www.playbytherules.net.au/toolkits/social-media-toolkit](http://www.playbytherules.net.au/toolkits/social-media-toolkit)