



Baseball Victoria – Child Safe Standards

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The purpose of the Child Safe Policy is to ensure that everyone involved in or connected to baseball are aware of the commitment and obligations Baseball Victoria (BV) has to creating a child safe organisation.

The Child Safe Standards aims to communicate BV's commitment to child safety in a way that can be understood by all including children, and it explains key features of BV's approach to meeting the Standards.

1. The Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards (Standards) were introduced via amendment to the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005* and are compulsory for all Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities for children. Compliance with the Standards is regulated and monitored by the Commission for Children and Young People. As a provider of services to children, BV has a legal obligation to comply with the Standards.

There are eleven Standards to be met. The Standards aim to drive cultural change so that protecting children from harm and abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers.

The seven Standards are as follows:

- Standard 1:** Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
- Standard 2:** Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
- Standard 3:** Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
- Standard 4:** Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
- Standard 5:** Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
- Standard 6:** People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
- Standard 7:** Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
- Standard 8:** Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
- Standard 9:** Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
- Standard 10:** Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
- Standard 11:** Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

In applying each standard, organisations must reflect and embed the following four key principles:

1. promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
2. promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
3. promoting the safety of children with a disability.
4. Promoting the safety of children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and/or queer (LGBTIQ+)

The principles recognise that while all children are vulnerable, some children face additional risk of harm. These include Aboriginal children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with disabilities. Organisations are required to consider the increased risks for these children, and to take action to promote safety.

Scope

These Standards apply to everyone involved in or connected to baseball including (but not limited to) participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, umpires and staff throughout all Baseball Victoria events and activities. These Standards are to be read in conjunction with the Child Safety Policy.

2. Statement supporting the Standards

Our commitment to child safety

All children have the right to feel and be safe. Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. BV is committed to providing a child safe environment where children are safe and feel safe, and where their voices are heard about the decisions that affect their lives.

BV is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse. All allegations and safety concerns are treated seriously and consistently through our policies and procedures. Our aim is to prevent child abuse through identifying risks, and, as soon as possible, taking steps to remove and reduce those risks.

We are committed to ensuring the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Standard 1: Culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children and young people

Cultural safety is the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination and more than *cultural awareness* and *cultural sensitivity*. It empowers people and enables them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves. In a child safe, culturally safe organisation, children, young people, family and community members feel that their culture and identity are respected.

1. A child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
2. Baseball Victoria's policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
3. The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
4. promotes the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by acknowledging Indigenous heritage at club level and respecting indigenous history by amending signage where possible to include indigenous names.

Standard 2: Strategies to embed an organisation culture of child safety

BV's commitment to child safety

1. Baseball Victoria makes a public commitment to child safety.
2. A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.

BV uses an outcomes-based approach to monitor its compliance with the Standards. The delivery of child safety and continuous improvement drives BV's compliance approach and decision-making. In this regard the Child Safe Policy is consistent with reduce barriers for participation and ensuring children and young people are safe in the organisations that they learn, play, and live in

Standard 3: Empowering children

BV has embedded its commitment to empowering children in the following ways:

1. BV's Child Safety policy is delivered pursuant to BV's responsibilities under the *Children Youth Families Act 2005*.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, including safety, information and participation.
3. Feedback boxes are prominently displayed at Little League and State Winter Championships.
4. Child Safety information is available to children and parents in a child friendly, inclusive, and accessible format through posters and prominently displayed information.
5. Continued discussions with members through surveys and club visits with aims to promote the value and influence of the member voice, including the voices of children, in all aspects of community services design, delivery and development to improve quality and safety.

Standard 4: Informing and promoting child safety and wellbeing to community

BV will ensure that families and communities have the capacity to speak up and drive conversations around child safety and wellbeing and they are informed about and involved in decision-making.

BV will respect and value the wealth of knowledge that communities can bring to the organisation by:

1. Listening to what families are saying in informal conversations with staff, and feed this up to executive management.
2. Respond to feedback and input from families and community by making changes to the operational policies and procedures, and feed this up to executive management.
3. Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.

Standard 5: Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

BV welcomes all children regardless of their circumstances, abilities, sex, gender, social, economic and/or cultural backgrounds. Staff and volunteers **will** have an awareness and knowledge of the needs of diverse communities, and proactively ensure that **the** organisation is accessible and responsive to these needs.

BV shall actively seek to engage with the needs of:

- children with disabilities,
- children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and/or queer (LGBTIQ+).

BV will respect policy and procedures for diverse needs by:

1. Paying particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.
2. Ensuring children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.
3. Informing management of feedback from children and families with diverse needs so that BV can continuously improve.

Standard 6: Suitable people to reflect child safety and wellbeing

BV applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers.

BV takes all reasonable steps to employ skilled people with the appropriate qualifications and prerequisites to work with children. All departmental position descriptions include BV's commitment to child safety, and these are advertised when positions become vacant. BV understands that we have ethical as well as legislative obligations when recruiting staff and volunteers.

All people who are engaged in child-related work and who are not exempt, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of BV being recorded as the 'employer' in the organisational field of the check.

BV will carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people, in accordance with BV's *Child Safety policy*. BV's *Child Safety Policy Annexure E: Recruitment and Screening*, guides staff where a position includes responsibility for children or is a position of leadership. This includes advice that interview questions should address experience and qualifications for undertaking work with children.

BV's Child Safe Code of Conduct contains our expectation for standard of behaviour expected of staff to keep children safe. BV employees are expected to report any breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct to the Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) or the Chief Executive Officer. If the breach relates to the employee's manager, the report is to be made to the BV Board.

Employees who breach the Child Safe Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with the relevant industrial instrument. Allegations of employee misconduct involving children may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

Standard 7: Responding and reporting

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified. BV have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks which include risks posed by physical environments and online environments.

BV takes all allegations of child abuse seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly, in accordance with our procedures for staff and volunteers. Our staff are trained to deal with allegations appropriately and reporting procedures are documented in operational manuals.

BV encourage all children, families, staff and volunteers to contact BV if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they suspect inappropriate behaviour. BV want all staff, volunteers, families and children to feel confident and comfortable to raise allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place. An adult who has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may include if:

1. a child states that they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves).
2. behaviour is consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed.
3. someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it.
4. an adult observes suspicious behaviour.

Concerns and complaints about child safety can be lodged as follows:

phone 03 9645 8000

email MPIO@baseballvictoria.com.au

e-form [HERE](#)

Standard 8: Ongoing education and training for staff and volunteers

BV is committed to regularly training and educating staff and volunteers on child safety risks.

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone at BV understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility. BV's expectations for standards of behaviour to keep children safe are incorporated into the following mandatory training requirements for staff.

1. Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policy.
2. Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.

BV support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to recognise indicators of child harm, protect children from abuse, promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

Standard 9: Physical and online environments promoting safety and wellbeing

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disabilities, and children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and/or queer (LGBTIQ+) may be at greater risk of harassment in online spaces.

BV has implemented measures to mitigate these risks, such as:

1. Actively monitoring and filtering harmful content and putting in place the highest level privacy settings.
2. Reducing the opportunity for children's exposure to online racism and other culturally unsafe behaviours or materials.
3. The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.
4. Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
5. BV and Third party suppliers have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people.

Standard 10: Standards are reviewed and improved

BV's duty of care obligations are documented in:

1. Baseball Victoria Staff Code of Conduct.
2. All staff position descriptions, recruitment policies and procedures.
3. Staff orientation programs, which includes training on the Standards.

Baseball Victoria regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices. Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement. Reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.

Standard 11: Risk management and mitigation

BV uses the following approaches to monitor its compliance with the Standards, for example:

1. Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
2. Policies and procedures are documents and easy to understand.
3. BV takes allegations from its staff about the safety of children seriously and creates an organisational culture where reporting is valued.
4. BV staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

3. Governance and accountability

BV is responsible for the Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Standards and Member Protection Policy.

BV's compliance with the Standards is overseen by the BV Board. Under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act, the Commission for Children and Young People holds regulatory powers to oversee and enforce organisations' compliance with the Standards.

4. Legislative responsibilities

BV takes its legal responsibilities in relation to the Standards seriously, together with other relevant legislative obligations:

Failure to disclose: adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to Victoria Police¹

Mandatory reporting: any staff or volunteers who are mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers, principals, out-of-home care workers, psychologists, youth justice officers, and police officers) must comply with their duties²

Failure to protect: people of authority³ in our organisation commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so⁴

Reportable conduct: under Part 5A of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* the CEO of BV, or the MPIO must be made aware of any allegations of physical and sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, significant emotional or psychological harm or significant neglect by an employee or volunteer towards a child. BV is legally required to notify the Commission for Children and Young People of such allegations

Duty of care: if a child is abused by an individual associated with BV, BV is presumed to have breached its duty of care unless it can prove that it took 'reasonable precautions' to prevent the abuse in question⁵.

Information sharing: under Part 6A of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* a number of organisations are prescribed to share information to promote the wellbeing and safety of children under the Child Information Sharing Scheme. For more information on this scheme, see the Victorian Government information sharing website at <https://www.vic.gov.au/information-sharing-schemes-and-the-maram-framework>

¹ *Crimes Act 1958*, section 327

² *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*

³ A person in authority is someone who, by reason of their position within an organisation, has the power or responsibility to reduce or remove a substantial risk of child sexual abuse.

⁴ *Crimes Act 1958*, section 49C

⁵ *Wrongs Act 1958*, Part XIII

5. Further information

Organisations may also refer to the information and resources available at:

Commission for Children and Young People (2021), Victoria's New Child Safe Standards [Information Sheet](#)

VicSport [Child Safety](#)

6. Definitions

Child means a child or young person under the age of 18 years.

Child Safe Standards as made under section 17(1) of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.

Child Abuse means any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or an offence under section 49B (2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* or the infliction of physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, or the serious neglect of a child.

7. Related external documents

[Betrayal of trust fact sheet: The organisational duty of care to prevent child abuse](#)

[Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005](#)

[Crimes Act 1958](#)

[Failure to disclose offence fact sheet](#)

[Mandatory reporting to child protection in Victoria – generic fact sheet](#)

[Wrongs Act 1958](#)