



CHILD SAFE FRAMEWORK

1. PURPOSE

Children and young people (aged 5-18 years) participate in many of our programs and we have a responsibility to deliver a sporting environment that is safe, caring and nurturing for all young participants.

We promote equity and respect diversity by:

- anticipating children's diverse circumstances and responding effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities;
- giving all children, parents, guardians and carers access to information, support and a complaints process, and
- paying attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in rugby, including staff and volunteers, to:

- protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation by all those involved in the sport;
- be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring outside of our sport that may have an impact on the children and young people; and
- create and maintain a child safe environment and culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer or access our programs and services.

We expect everyone within our sport, regardless of their role or level of responsibility, to act to keep children and young people safe from such harm by:

- adopting the practices, behaviours and standards that we have set when carrying out their roles;
- reporting any alleged abuse or neglect to management and/or to external authorities responsible for child protection or the police, regardless of whether that abuse is allegedly being perpetrated by staff or volunteers within our sport, or by those outside our sport including from the child's family, extended family, friends or strangers.





2. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Directors, CEO and Executive Committee are responsible for the development and endorsement of the *Rugby Australia Child Safe Framework*. Rugby Australia delegates the implementation of the policy to the Member Unions and Affiliates.

The role of each body in relation to the development of and compliance with the framework is set out in the table below:

Body	Role/Responsibility
Rugby Australia Board of Directors, CEO and Executive Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commitment to the <i>Rugby Australia Child Safe Framework</i> and the <i>Rugby Australia Safeguarding Children Guidelines</i>;• Support the review of the framework and guidelines on an annual basis or as required by legislation, regulations, or organisational learnings that call for a change to the framework and guidelines;• Support a culture of openness, improvement and accountability in relation to child protection and member welfare issues.
Rugby AU Staff, Member Unions and Affiliates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their obligations in accordance with the framework and guidelines;• Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of the appropriate recruitment, screening and employment practices in relation to recruiting individuals into specific roles working or volunteering with children and families;• Ensure that the Child Safe Framework, Member Protection Policy and Safeguarding Children Guidelines are implemented and complied with by relevant stakeholders;• Support staff and volunteers to ensure that all appropriate action is taken to protect a child from abuse, neglect, grooming or exploitation;• Ensure that all appropriate support, such as counselling and formal debriefing, is provided to any staff and volunteers involved in a matter relating to the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person;• Advocate and promote children and young people’s rights and empowering them in support of this framework;





Body	Role/Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proactively sharing resources and experiences in the development of child safe initiatives as they are identified.
Member Unions, Affiliates and Rugby Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the commitments and expectations of this framework, as well as all other policies and guidelines relevant to child safety;• Undertake any induction/training anticipated in this framework, in relation to policy and procedures relevant to keeping children and young people safe;• Seek guidance from a supervisor or manager if there is ever any lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this framework;• Act to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation; and• Assist in creating and maintaining a child safe culture and a culture of inclusion and safety.

3. OUR COMMITMENT

Rugby Australia is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people involved in our sport. Our policies, frameworks and procedures seek to address any risk to child safety and to establish child safe culture and practices. Our child safe policies are accessible and in a form that are easy to understand; have been informed by stakeholder consultation; and are communicated to children, young people and their families, our staff and volunteers and the public. We will regularly review our policies, consult and advise our staff and volunteers of any changes.

3.1 Expected Standards of Behaviour by Our Staff and Volunteers

We ensure that all those involved in the delivery of our services to children and young people understand their roles and expected standards of behaviour in relation to keeping children and young people safe from abuse and neglect through the application of the Code of Conduct, Member Protection Policy and Safeguarding Children Guidelines. We use position descriptions that clearly state the relevant child safe requirements. Our Safeguarding Children Guidelines, approved and endorsed from the highest levels of our organisation, outlines our expected standards of behaviour towards children and young people. Our staff and volunteers are provided with all relevant documents and are required to indicate, in writing, that they have read and are committed to the expectations set out.





3.2 Minimising the Risk of Recruiting Unsuitable People

We have measures in place to seek to minimise the risk that we will recruit staff or volunteers that are unsuitable to work / volunteer with children or young people. We have recruitment procedures that seek to ensure that:

- Our Child Safe Framework is communicated to all potential applicants;
- Face-to-face interviews are held that will include child safety related questions;
- Two professional reference checks are undertaken;
- Screening checks are undertaken, including working with children, qualifications, identity, and criminal record.

3.3 Induction and Training is Part of Our Commitment

All new staff and volunteers have access to information during their induction about our commitment to keep children safe including our Code of Conduct, Member Protection Policy and Safeguarding Children Guidelines. We have a process for ensuring that all staff and volunteers complete child safe training through online education and minimum requirements across the workforce.

We also support ongoing education and training for our staff and volunteers to ensure child safe information is provided in an ongoing way. We ensure that our staff and volunteers have up to date information relevant to specific legislation applying in the state or territory they are based in or where they may travel to as a part of their duties.

All Member Union Directors are required to complete Rugby Australia's integrity online training which includes education on the Code of Conduct and Member Protection Policy. Directors are also required to hold a valid and current Working with Children Check relevant to their state and/or territory legislation. This is required independent of any state legislative requirements regarding their role as a Director.

3.4 We Encourage the Involvement of Children and Young people, their Parents, Guardians or Carers

We provide information to children and their carers (such as brochures, posters, handbooks, guidelines) about:

- Our commitment to keeping children safe and communicating their rights
- The behaviour we expect of our staff and volunteers and of themselves
- Our policy about responding to child abuse

3.5 Our Staff and Volunteers Understand their Responsibilities for Reporting alleged Child Protection Issues





Our policy for responding to child protection issues is approved and endorsed from the highest level of our organisation and applies to all our staff and volunteers. This requires that:

- Staff and volunteers must immediately report alleged abuse or neglect and any concerns with any practices or behaviour of staff or volunteers;
- Staff and volunteers must also comply with any legislative reporting requirements;
- Staff and volunteers must follow a specified process when reporting alleged abuse or neglect including who will receive reports; and
- Staff and volunteers understand that failure to report may be considered serious misconduct.

We document any allegations, disclosures or concerns regarding child safety issues and monitor responses to all allegations, disclosures or concerns.

3.6 We are Committed to Maintaining and Improving Our Policies and Practices

We are committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures and practices to keep children and young people who participate in rugby safe from neglect and abuse. We communicate with our staff and volunteers to ensure that they understand our policies and that the policies are effective in the work place.

We require our staff and volunteers to disclose convictions or charges affecting their suitability to work with children and young people and our Member Unions review police records and Working with Children Checks (WWCC) periodically. We regularly review our policies and processes to identify and document any potential risks to children or young people participating in our sport.

Rugby Australia will support all Member Unions with the implementation of this Framework and the Safeguarding Children Guidelines through training and education. Rugby Australia will also conduct an audit of compliance of the Safeguarding Children Guidelines six months after the roll out and every 12 months after that.

