



CHILD SAFETY DISCUSSION

Why Are We Here?

We want every child and young person in our club to have a safe, fun, enjoyable experience.

- **Question:** What do you love most about our club and how do our values align with child safety?
- **Insight:** Child abuse is not an issue of the past. 1 in 5 girls and 1 in 8 boys have experienced sexual abuse.



Everyone's Responsibility

Everyone in this room is responsible for looking out for the safety of children and young people.

- **Insight:** Our club has made a commitment to children and young people and their parents/guardians to provide a safe physical and online environment for all children and young people.

- **Insight:** Coaches, junior coordinators and Blast coordinators engage most frequently with children and young people. You need to follow our Code of Behaviour and look out for the safety of junior members.

About Child Abuse

Abuse is an incident, or multiple incidents, which causes, is causing or is likely to cause a detrimental effect to a child or young person's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing.

- **Insight:** Most child abuse is committed by persons known to the victim and most forms of abuse – physical, emotional, neglect and witnessing domestic violence – are perpetrated by people in parental and caregiver roles.
- **Insight:** Research shows child sexual abuse is more likely committed by adults within and around the family, including 'non-familial known persons,' being adults who have contact with children in schools, sporting clubs and other settings.
- **Insight:** Child sexual abuse is predominantly perpetrated by males, and one-third to half of abuse is perpetrated by males under the age of 18.

About Grooming

Grooming is a process where an adult establishes a trusting relationship with a child or young person and those close to them, to create an environment in which abuse can occur

Insight: Grooming can take place in any setting, including without limitation training, at a match, in social settings, text messages, social media, online chatrooms or any other means of communication.

Insight: the Royal Commission identified ways grooming has occurred in sporting settings:

- Through the erosion of interpersonal boundaries by subtle behaviours. The development of close coach and player relationships is a situation which can be exploited.
- Through inappropriate activities such as providing alcohol, unsolicited gifts or favours to build a secret bond that is hidden from others.



[•Watch: NSW Office of the Children's Guardian video about Grooming](#)

Risk Factors

Clubs reflect their local communities, meaning various normalised cultures and other factors can increase the risk of abuse occurring at a club.

• **Insight:** the Royal Commission identified factors that can increase the risk of child abuse occurring:

- A deeper level of involvement with an organisation increases the likelihood of exposure to risky situations.
- When adults or the organisation's reputation are valued above the safety of children.
- Normalised cultures of bullying and harassment create a heightened risk of abuse.

• **Insight:** some children are more vulnerable than others to abuse. They might:

- Have a disability or mental health issues;
- Be socially isolated, experiencing poverty, divorce or trauma;
- Have previously been a victim of abuse or maltreatment;
- Have experienced racism, sexism or homophobia.

• **Question:** Do any of the risk factors or indicators of vulnerability resonate with our club?

Recognising Abuse

Indicators of Grooming

- Development of an unusually close relationship between an adult and child
- Mood changes, including anxious, depressive or withdrawn behaviours.
- Being secretive about the use of online technology and social media.

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Direct or indirect disclosures of abuse
- Fear of particular adults or places
- Concerning or age inappropriate behaviours

Indicators of Neglect

- Being consistently hungry, tired and listless
- Little positive interaction with a parent, carer or guardian
- Aggressive behaviour or irritability

We all need to keep an eye for signs that a child or young person at our club has suffered any form of abuse.





We All Have A Role To Play

Together we need to:

- Discuss child safety at committee meetings
- Adhere to our Policy requirements to recruit and screen new members
- Prioritise the safety and well-being of Children and Young People involved in our sport
- Report any suspicions or allegations of abuse/grooming and any behaviour which breaches our Code of Behaviour

Your Responsibilities

Adhere to the Code of Behaviour by:

- Never engaging in sexual misconduct and inappropriate physical contact;
- Providing positive guidance and discipline;
- Acting within the scope of your role;
- Never using language that is harmful, discriminatory, racist, sexist, homophobic, bi-phobic or transphobic;
- Avoiding one-to-one unsupervised situations, including avoiding transporting children without explicit parent/guardian and club consent;
- Restricting communication with children and young people to issues directly related to the club and never communicating online with children without including you as the parent/guardian;
- Never supplying children with alcohol or drugs;
- Always obtaining parent/guardian consent for photographs, footage or livestreaming involving children.

Empowering Children

- Treat all young people equally and don't have favourites
- Be transparent with the committee about your engagement and interactions with children and young people
- Don't ask children and young people to share things that are personal and private, except in the context of providing support or care
- Don't share private information that is not relevant to your role
- Don't interact with children and young people outside of the club (except with the knowledge and permission of our club and parent/guardians)
- Have transparent relationships with children and young people, with clear goals and outcomes

What's Your Role?

Reporting Or Responding To Concerns

If you have any concerns, suspicions or receive an allegation of abuse, let Cathy Craggs know straight away. See something, say something!

Cathy Craggs 0407 860 660 or childsafety@eastkeilorcc.com.au

•Insight: *Research indicates children are most likely to report abuse to their mum, then a friend, then their dad. Any concerns mentioned to you must be relayed to Cathy Craggs immediately.*



THANK YOU

We want every child and young person in our club to have a safe, fun, enjoyable experience.

- **Question:** discuss in pairs... what's one thing you will do this season to keep an eye out for the safety of children and young people?

- **Homework:** Let's ensure we have all completed the 'Child Safeguarding in Sport Introduction' Online Course, which details how to recognise abuse in sport settings at elearning.sportintegrity.gov.au