

Child Safe Policy – Boronia Hawks Football Netball Club

BHFNC Child Safety Officer – Ye Jeffries

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Written By: *Scott Nicholas*

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Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the Board, committees and volunteers of the Boronia Hawks Football Netball Club (the Club) to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices the Club has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

Commitment to Child Safety

The Boronia Hawks Football Netball Club is committed to promoting and protecting the safety and well-being of children and young people in our care who access activities, programs, services or facilities for which the club is responsible for.

All children who are a part of the Club have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and the Club has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The Club aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun and the Club's activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

Application of this Policy

This policy was developed by the Club in collaboration with AFL Victoria, as well as staff, volunteers and the children who use our services and their parents.

This policy applies to all individuals involved in our organisation (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:

- Administrators
- Coaches
- Officials
- Participants
- Parents

- Spectators.

All of the people to which this policy applies have a role and responsibility in relation to child protection. They must all:

- understand the indicators and risks of child abuse;
- appropriately act on any concerns raised by children; and
- understand and follow all applicable laws in relation to the protection of children and reporting or management of child safety concerns.
- Understand and sign the club's Child Safe Code of Conduct

Child Abuse

Child abuse can take a broad range of forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect. People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that child abuse can occur whenever there is actual or potential harm to a child, and these are circumstances that the Club is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

The Club encourages children to express their views about their safety. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

The club commits to:

- Communicate and display information about who the Child Safe Officer is so children and parents are aware who to speak with
- Display posters within the club promoting the club is a 'Child Safe Club'

Valuing Diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability and their families; and

Recruiting staff and volunteers

The Club takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers:

- Interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers
- Require Working with Children Checks for relevant positions and supply this information to Eastern Football League through appropriate reporting.
 - Board and Committee Members
 - Team Managers
 - Coaches
 - Trainers
 - Runners
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements and as part of the induction process for new staff or volunteers.

Supporting staff and volunteers

The Club seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our board and committee members and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

The club commits to:

- *Appointing a Child Safety Officer*
- *Ensure all committee members and volunteers have read and understood the Club's Child Safe Code of Conduct and keep a signed copy of this on record*

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The Club has appointed **Ye Jeffries** as Child Safety Officer with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by committee, volunteers, parents or children. That person can be contacted at ye.cmau90@gmail.com. Our complaints process is outlined in *Constitution of the Club*.

Risk Management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children. For example, this should be a consideration when:

- waiting for children to be picked-up from training or match day
- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- travel to and from games or training;
- physical contact when coaching, managing or administering first aid to children
- communicating with children via social media, email or text message

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers involved in the Club.