

CHILD PROTECTION &
MANDATORY REPORTING
POLICY



Cleveland United Soccer Club Inc.

Table of Contents

Frontpage:	1
Table of Contents:	2
Aim:	3
Implementation:	3
Mandatory Reporters:	3
Non-mandated staff members:	3
CHILD ABUSE:	4
What is child abuse?	4
Who is most likely to be impacted by child abuse?	4
Spotting the Warning Signs of Child Abuse: For Club Volunteers:	5
A REASONABLE BELIEF:	5
When should I act?	5
What are the signs that a child has been abused?	5
Common PHYSICAL indicators of child abuse	6

Common BEHAVIOURAL indicators of child abuse..... 7

What are the signs that an adult is perpetrating abuse? 8

Common indicators of adults abusing children:..... 8

Family members (parents, siblings, extended family)..... 8

**Other adults (e.g. members of the management committee,
coaches)..... 9**

Where to go for further advice? 10

CHILD PROTECTION & MANDATORY REPORTING POLICY

Aim:

The aim of this policy is to explain the roles and responsibilities of the club volunteers to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Implementation:

Mandatory Reporters:

All volunteers, such as the management committee and the coaches are 'mandatory reporters'. This means that in the course of undertaking their duties, they must report to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of sexual abuse or physical injury and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. They must report as soon as practicable after forming the belief.

Non-mandated staff members:

Any person, who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, may report their concerns to Child Protection. This means that any person, including non-mandated member of the management committee and the coaches, is able to make a report to Child Protection or Victoria Police when they believe that a child or young person is at risk of harm and in need of protection, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

CHILD ABUSE:

What is child abuse?

Child abuse can include physical abuse, sexual abuse, grooming, emotional or psychological harm, neglect or family violence. It doesn't have to involve physical contact or force. Child abuse can include:

- talking to a child in a sexually explicit way
- grooming a child for future sexual activity
- forcing a child to watch pornography
- being witness to family violence
- failing to provide a child with an adequate standard of nutrition, supervision or medical care to the extent that the development of the child is placed at serious risk, or is significantly impaired

Who is most likely to be impacted by child abuse?

Any child can be victim to child abuse, however children who are vulnerable, isolated and/or have a disability are disproportionately abused.

Abuse is often committed by someone the child knows well such as a family member or someone within the club setting. In fact, child abuse can be committed by any member of the community.

Regardless of who the perpetrator or victim is the trauma of child abuse can have devastating impacts upon a child's wellbeing and development that can last for the rest of their life.

This is why it is critical that we respond immediately to any form of suspected abuse within our club community

Spotting the Warning Signs of Child Abuse: For Club Volunteers:

A REASONABLE BELIEF:

What do I do if I suspect (form a reasonable belief) a child is being abused?

You **MUST** take action as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or suspect that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused.

You **MUST** act whenever you form a reasonable belief which means acting even if you are unsure and have not directly observed the abuse. Failure to act can be a criminal offence. You **MUST** follow the Four Critical Actions: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse.

When should I act?

You **MUST** act even if you are unsure and have not observed the abuse.

You **MUST** follow the Four Critical Actions: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse. Failure to act can be a criminal offence.

What are the signs that a child has been abused?

The most common physical and behavioural indicators of child abuse are outlined below.

This is not an exhaustive list.

If you feel uncomfortable about a child's physical presentation or behaviour, but have not directly witnessed or been told about abuse, or risk of abuse, you should still act.

You can seek further advice and if you form a reasonable belief that a child has been abused, is being abused, or is at risk of abuse then you.

Common PHYSICAL indicators of child abuse

- bruises, welts, cuts/grazes or burns (especially those on back, bottom, legs, arms and inner thighs or in unusual configurations and may resemble an object)
- internal injuries and bone fractures not consistent with the explanation offered
- any injury to the genital or rectal area (e.g. bruising, bleeding, infection or anything causing pain to go to the toilet)
- wearing clothes unsuitable for weather conditions to hide injuries
- sexually-transmitted diseases and/or frequent urinary tract infections
- appearing consistently dirty and unwashed and/or inappropriately dressed for weather conditions
- being consistently hungry, tired and listless
- having unattended health problems and lack of routine medical care

- internal injuries.

Common BEHAVIOURAL indicators of child abuse

- disclosure of abuse and/or drawings or writing which depicts violence and abuse
- habitual absences from activities without reasonable explanation
- significant and unexplained delays in emotional, mental or physical development regressive or unusual changes to behaviour (e.g. sudden decline in academic performance, nervousness, depression. withdrawal, hyperactivity,
- aggression, bedwetting)
- drug or alcohol misuse, suicide or self-harm, harm to others or animals
- an inconsistent or unlikely explanation for an injury, or inability to remember the cause
- reluctance to go home and/or a wariness or fear of a parent/carer
- unusual fear of physical contact with adults
- persistent and age-inappropriate sexual activity (e.g. excessive masturbation or rubbing genitals against adults, promiscuity)
- poor self-care or personal hygiene

- an unusually close connection with an older person
- possessing expensive gifts or money (e.g. a new mobile phone given to them by a “friend”)
- taking on a caretaker role prematurely, trying to protect other family members.

What are the signs that an adult is perpetrating abuse?

The most common indicators that an adult is abusing a child are outlined below. This is not an exhaustive list.

If you feel uncomfortable in any way about a relationship between an adult and a child (or inappropriate relationships between children such as siblings) you MUST still act.

Common indicators of adults abusing children:

Family members (parents, siblings, extended family)

- attempts by one parent to alienate their child from the other parent
- overprotective or volatile relationships
- reluctance by the child to be alone with one or more of their family members
- a child and a sibling behaving like boyfriend and girlfriend (embarrassment if they are found alone together)

Other adults (e.g. members of the management committee, coaches)

- touching a child inappropriately
- bringing up sexual material or personal disclosures into conversations with a child
- inappropriate contact with the child (e.g. calls, emails, texts, social media)
- obvious or inappropriate preferential treatment of the child (making them feel “special”)
- giving inappropriate/expensive gifts to a child
- having inappropriate social boundaries (e.g. telling the child about their own personal problems)
- offering to drive a child to or from activities
- inviting themselves over to their homes, calling them at night
- befriending the parents/carers of the child and making visits to their home
- undermining the child’s reputation (so that the child won’t be believed)

Where to go for further advice?

- Your President of the club or a member of the leadership team
- Your coaches
- DHHS Child Protection on 131 278
- Your local police station In addition
- Football Federation Australia +61 (2) 8020 4000
- Football Victoria (03) 9474 1800