

Australian Nudist Federation

Child Protection Policy

Forward

In any Australian community Children and Young People have the right to be safe from abuse and harm. The situation is no different within a naturist or clothing optional setting. The expectation is that we all have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children and young persons.

The purpose of this document is to provide a fundamental policy for clubs, resorts and groups such as free beach users affiliated with the ANF for the benefit and protection of children who are truly the future of our lifestyle.

A good deal of the content of this document has been derived from proven Child Protection Policies established by junior sporting clubs, Surf Life Saving New South Wales and reference material sourced from the NSW Police Force Child Protection Guidelines. The principal Acts of Parliament established by each state and territory for the protection of children, and the regulation of persons working with, or caring for children and young persons came about as a result of the NSW Police Royal Commission headed by Justice WOOD in the mid 1990s which identified pockets of well organized pedophile activity and an unacceptable occurrence of child abuse in general terms.

Nation-wide, most Child Protection Policies (CPPs) focus on vetting adults and adolescents for their suitability to work with, care for, coach or mentor children or young persons. The express goal of these CPPs is to eliminate, where possible, the employment or interaction of inappropriate or 'prohibited persons' in environments where children and young persons are participating in countless organized activities.

Notwithstanding the apparent absence of paid or unpaid work, care-giving or coaching of children or young persons within our affiliated clubs, resorts/B&Bs or groups it is incumbent on executives, managers or owners of clubs and resorts that they be aware of what may constitute inappropriate conduct in the presence of children and the indicators of child abuse in its many forms in order to make an informed decision on what to report to authorities if the need arises.

Much of what needs to be done to ensure the protection of children and young persons in our naturist environments comes down to:

- * Common sense - by behaving appropriately and within established naturist etiquettes
- * Communication - talking to each other about matters impinging on child protection
- * Co-ordination - between executives of clubs, resorts or social groups and their clients
- * Control - supervise and monitor children and young persons without crowding them

Examples of inappropriate conduct in the presence of children

Children and young persons are extremely receptive to behaviours, images and other stimuli to which they may be exposed. They absorb and react to these experiences, good or bad therefore it is essential that inappropriate conduct be eliminated or at least minimized in the presence of children in any environment.

The following list includes examples of inappropriate conduct in the presence of children and is by no means exhaustive:

- * Gawking, starrng, crowding
- * Unwarranted touching, particularly by a non-parent or guardian of a child
- * Offering of confectionary or gifts to non-acquainted children
- * Displays/images of an explicit or a sexual nature including arousal
- * Excessive consumption of alcohol, impairment of judgment and parenting skills
- * Offensive, demeaning or hurtful language
- * Smoking in enclosed areas
- * Rough play/skylarking in areas where children or young persons may be injured
- * Taking photos of any child by a non-parent or guardian without rational consent

Definition and indicators of Child Abuse

Physical Abuse:

Definition – Physical abuse refers to non-accidental injury and/or harm to a child or young person caused by a parent, care-giver or another person responsible for the child or young person.

Indicators – It is important to note that one indicator may not constitute abuse. Common indicators of physical abuse include:

- * Lacerations and welts from excessive discipline or physical restraint
- * Facial, head and neck bruising
- * Strangulation
- * Attempted suffocation
- * Burns or scolds
- * Multiple injuries or bruises
- * Dislocations, sprains, twisting
- * Ingestion of poisonous substances, alcohol or other harmful drugs
- * Other bruising and marks that depict the shape of an object that caused it, for e.g.: a handprint or a belt buckle
- * An explanation offered by the child that is not consistent with the injury
- * Bite marks and scratches where the bruises may show an outline of teeth – experts can determine whether or not it is an adult bite
- * Ruptured internal organs without a history of major trauma

- * Fractures of bones
- * Head injuries where the child or young person may have indicators of drowsiness, vomiting, fits or retinal hemorrhages suggesting the possibility of having been shaken

General indicators of female genital mutilation may include:

- * Difficulties with toileting
- * Having a special operation associated with celebrations
- * A reluctance to be involved in sport or other physical activity when previously keen

Emotional Abuse:

Definition – Emotional abuse encompasses a range of behaviours that may psychologically harm a child or young person. It is behaviour by a parent or care-giver that can destroy the confidence of a child and result in significant emotional deprivation or trauma. It involves the impairment of a child's social, emotional, cognitive, intellectual development and/or disturbance of behaviour.

Emotional abuse may include:

- * Excessive or unreasonable demands
- * Failure to provide the psychological nurturing and affection necessary for a child's physical and emotional growth and development
- * Scapegoating or rejecting
- * Severe verbal abuse and threats of abuse

Indicators – Indicators of emotional abuse may include:

- * Feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- * Inability to value others
- * Lack of trust in people and expectations
- * Lack of interpersonal skills necessary for adequate functioning
- * Extreme attention seeking behaviour
- * Behavioral disorders (e.g. disruptiveness, aggressiveness, bullying)

Sexual Abuse:

It takes a great deal of courage for a child or young person to disclose that they have been sexually abused. The way disclose or tell may not be direct. When a child discloses, the person they tell is someone they trust and the manner in which that person deals with the information is very important.

If a child tells you that he/she has been sexually abused, listen carefully and believe the child. Reassure the child that he/she is not to blame and has done the correct thing by telling of the abuse. Try not to show emotions such as shock, and inform the child that you must tell some other trustworthy people and that those people will help.

Definition – Child sexual abuse is any sexual act or sexual threat imposed on a child or young person. Adults or adolescents who perpetrate child sexual abuse exploit the dependency and immaturity of children. Coercion, which may be physical or psychological, is intrinsic to child sexual abuse and differentiates such abuse from consensual peer sexual activity.

Sexually Abusive Behaviours

Behaviours that constitute sexual abuse include:

- * Inappropriate kissing and fondling
- * Masturbation, flashing, fellatio, cunnilingus
- * Digital, penile or object penetration of a child or young person's body
- * Use of children for pornography or prostitution
- * Bestiality, forced participation in sexual activity with other children

Indicators – Below are indicators that will assist in determining if a child or young person has been, is, or may be being sexually abused.

- * Child describing sexual acts (e.g. 'daddy hurts my wee wee')
- * Direct or indirect disclosures
- * Persistent running away from home
- * Age-inappropriate behaviour, drug dependency, suicide attempts, self mutilation
- * Anorexia or overeating
- * Going to bed fully clothed
- * Regression in developmental achievements in younger children
- * Child or young person being contact with a known or suspected perpetrator of sexual assault
- * Unexplained accumulation of money or gifts
- * Bleeding from the vagina or external genitalia or anus
- * Injuries such a tears or bruising to the genitalia, anus or perineal region
- * Sexually transmitted diseases
- * Drawings depicting sexual acts
- * Adolescent pregnancy
- * Trauma to the breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs

Neglect:

Definition – Neglect occurs where there is a risk of harm or actual harm to a child or young person caused by the failure to provide the basic physical and emotional necessities of life. Neglect is characterized as a continuum of omissions in the care of a child or young person.

It may include failure to provide:

- * Food, clothing, shelter
- * Emotional security, affectionate attachments
- * Medical care and adequate supervision

Indicators- Neglect may be detected by observing if the following occurs on a regular basis:

- * Poor standards of hygiene leading to social isolation
- * Scavenging or stealing food
- * Extended stays at school, public places or other homes
- * Being focused on basic survival
- * Extreme longing for adult affection
- * A flat and superficial way of relating, lacking a sense of genuine interaction
- * Anxiety about being dropped or abandoned
- * Self comforting behaviour e.g.: rocking, sucking
- * Loss of skin bloom and hair texture
- * Untreated physical problems

Domestic Violence – Domestic violence is violence, abuse, intimidatory or controlling behaviour perpetrated by one person against another in a personal, intimate or family relationship. Domestic violence occurs between two or more people where one has power over the other causing fear, physical and/or psychological harm.

Domestic violence can have a profound effect on children and young people and can constitute a form of child abuse. Children and young people can be affected by:

- * Being in the presence of or by being exposed to violence in the parental relationship
- * Becoming victims of violence
- * Becoming perpetrators of violence through inappropriate adult role models
- * A combination of all three

Police, Teachers, Medical professionals and other agencies involving care & protection of children are mandated by legislation to report the presence of any child (under 18) witnessing any domestic violence to State Child Care and Protection Authorities.

How to report child abuse

Rationale

Issues regarding child abuse and the reporting of allegations of child abuse is highly sensitive and should be dealt with in a confidential manner.

What should be reported?

Some incidents may seem minor, however they may in fact reveal more serious concerns of misconduct or a pattern of behaviour that requires further scrutiny.

If there are any reasonable concerns that child may be at risk, contact your local police or child protection agency in the relevant state or territory. If the concern is serious and

immediate intervention is required for the protection of any child ring '000' and request police assistance.

Club executives, resort owners or managers should compile an up to date list of relevant contact phone numbers should notifications of child abuse need to be made to police, medical or child welfare professionals.

Australian Child Protection Legislation

The role and scope of child protection is primarily outlined in the principal child protection Acts in each Australian state and territory. The principles embedded in legislation formally represent the philosophical underpinnings of child protection practice. Together with policy frameworks, which depict the nature, extent, and fashion in which services and interventions are to be provided, legislative principles reflect the service goals to which governments aspire. Legislation also provides the legal framework pursuant to which governments can intervene to protect children.

The following table lists the principal child protection Acts in each Australian state and territory. The table also outlines other Acts of Parliament pertinent to the operation and delivery of various services to children and families across Australia. In addition, the table provides links to websites where Acts of Parliament for each state and territory can be downloaded.

Jurisdiction

Legislation

Australian Capital Territory

Principal Act/s:

(Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services)
<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/>

* *Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)*

New South Wales

Principal Act/s:

(Department of Community Services)
<http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/>

* *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)*

Other relevant Act/s:

* *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Parental Responsibility)*

Contracts) Act 2006 (NSW)

* *Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2006 (NSW)*

* *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 (NSW)*

Northern Territory

Principal Act/s:

(Children, Youth and Families,
Department of Health and Families)

<http://www.nt.gov.au/lant/hansard/hansard.shtml>

* *Care and Protection of Children Act 2008 (NT)*

* *Care and Protection of Children Draft Act (NT) (currently before Cabinet)*

Other relevant Act/s:

* *Information Act 2006 (NT)*

* *Criminal Code Act 2006 (NT)*

Queensland

Principal Act/s:

(Department of Child Safety)

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/OQPChome.htm>

* *Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD)*

Other relevant Act/s:

* *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (QLD)*

South Australia

Principal Act/s:

(Families SA: Department for Families
And Communities)

<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/index.aspx>

* *Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA)*

Other relevant Act/s:

* *Children's Protection Regulations*

	<p>2006 (SA)</p> <p><i>* Family and Community Services Act 1972 (SA)</i></p>
Tasmania	<p>Principal Act/s:</p> <p><i>* Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (TAS)</i></p>
<p>(Child Protection Services, Department Of Health and Human Services)</p> <p>http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/index.w3p</p>	<p>Other relevant Act/s:</p> <p><i>* The Family Violence Act 2004 (TAS)</i></p>
Victoria	<p>Principal Act/s:</p> <p><i>* Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (VIC)</i></p>
<p>(Children Protection and Juvenile Justice Branch: Department of Human Services)</p> <p>http://www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/</p>	<p>Other relevant Act/s:</p> <p><i>* Working with Children Act (VIC)</i></p> <p><i>* Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (VIC)</i></p> <p><i>* The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (VIC)</i></p>
Western Australia	<p>Principal Act/s:</p> <p><i>* Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)</i></p>
<p>(Department for Child Protection)</p> <p>http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/statutes/swans.nsf</p>	<p>Other relevant Act/s:</p> <p><i>* Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)</i></p>

Source:

**National Child Protection Clearinghouse
Australian Institute of Family Studies**