



Child Safe Policy

Written By: *Linda Sarah (Secretary)*
Approved By: *Jo Barton (Vice President)*
Endorsed By: *Avonde Executive Committee*
Date of Review: *09 January 2023*

Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers of the *Avonde Calisthenics College Inc (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

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 and in collaboration with 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.

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.

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;
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation; and
- seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Recruiting staff and volunteers

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

- Require police checks and Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in our Information Handbook and Membership form.

Supporting 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 staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The Club has appointed Child Safety Officers with the specific responsibility for responding to any concerns or complaints made by coaches, volunteers, parents/guardians or children and young persons. The nominated Child Safety Officers will be communicated to all club members at the start of each year via our members handbook. They can be contacted by childsafety@avondecalisthenics.com.au. Only the nominated Child Safety Officers will access this email inbox.

Our complaints process is outlined in *the Avonde Information Handbook*. Specific concerns/complaints with relation to child safety should be reported as soon as possible to enable the situation to be managed in the interests of the child or young person.

We will ensure that all our members and volunteers are able to identify and respond appropriately to children and young persons at risk of harm and that they are aware of their responsibilities under state laws to make a report if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child or young persons has been, or is being, abused or neglected.

Further, if any person believes that another person bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child or young person, or is in breach of this policy, he or she may make an internal complaint to us.

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:

- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- travel; or
- physical contact when coaching or managing children.

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.