

## Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates the strong commitment of management and staff to child safety and wellbeing, and how our organisation keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

### 1. Commitment to child safety

All children who come to FISAF Australia events have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children at our events will always be our first priority and we, and our Member Organisations, have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun while enjoying sport aerobics.

### 2. Purpose

This Policy outlines how FISAF Australia prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps we will take to do this.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to FISAF Australia staff members, committee members, children, coaches and other individuals who are present at our events and involved in FISAF Australia activities.

### 4. Definitions

*Management Team* means the Director, the Sport Development Manager and the Administration & Events Manager of FISAF Australia.

*Member Organisations* means any club or school that holds a current or past membership with FISAF Australia.

*Child abuse* means the mistreatment of a Child that:

- cause, is causing or is likely to cause any detrimental effect on that Child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing; or
- does, or is likely to, endanger a Child's physical or emotional health, development, or wellbeing.

*Harm* is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

*Child/Children* means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

*Concern* refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

*Complaint* means an expression of dissatisfaction to FISAF Australia related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with FISAF Australia
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
- the conduct of a child or young person at FISAF Australia
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

## **5. Role of the Management Team**

The Management Team has the role of making sure FISAF Australia prioritises children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.

The Management Team will champion and model a child safe culture at FISAF Australia. We encourage anyone involved with our events or our Member Organisations to report a child safety concern. The Management Team will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.

Everyone at FISAF Australia and its Member Organisations has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. The Management Team will make sure that its staff are conducting risk assessments and taking action to manage risks in accordance with this policy.

The Management Team will conduct an annual review of how effectively FISAF Australia is delivering child safety and wellbeing. The input of people involved with FISAF Australia will be sought as part of this review.

## **6. Role of Member Organisations**

Member organisations, and their coaches, are responsible for making suitable arrangements with their athletes and parents to ensure there is a clear plan for the supervision of Children for the entirety each FISAF Australia event.

The Member Organisation must provide clear communication to athletes and/ the athlete's parent/carer prior to the event and ensure that both the athlete and their parent/carer understands where and when they must arrive and depart the event venue, and what is expected of the athlete and all coaches throughout the event to ensure the Child's safety.

FISAF Australia recommends that every Child be personally handed over to the representing coach by a parent/carer at each event, and personally handed back to the parent at the arranged time. When minors are travelling with their coach or another person to and from events, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to manage risk to the child with the person they have nominated their child to travel with. Concerns in this instance should be raised with the relevant Member Organisation.

## **7. Children's empowerment and participation**

We want children to have fun, develop new friends, and be supportive of each other through their participation at FISAF Australia events. We do not tolerate bullying or abusive behaviour between children and take action in conjunction with the relevant Member Organisation, if this occurs at any of the FISAF Australia events.

We respect the rights of children and provide them with information about their rights including the right to be safe at FISAF Australia events. FISAF Australia values the voices of children and will act on safety concerns raised by children or their families.

Information about FISAF Australia events and policies is available to access at any time via the website ([www.fisafaaustralia.com.au](http://www.fisafaaustralia.com.au)).

## **8. Families and communities**

FISAF Australia recognises the important role of families and involves parents and carers when making significant decisions about their child. Parents, families and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time through our contact email address, or via their relevant Member Organisation.

FISAF Australia provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices including through:

- publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct on our website
- including information about our child safe practices and policies in the Spectator & Competitor Information Pack for each event
- communicating with Member Organisations to encourage them to share information directly with their athletes and their families.

## **9. Valuing diversity**

We value diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, we:

- welcome and support participation of all children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- plan programming that reflects the diversity of athletes, particularly age groups.

## **10. Code of Conduct**

FISAF Australia has a Code of Conduct which includes protocols related to child safety and wellbeing. Staff, Coaches, Spectators and the Management Team must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including termination of a person's involvement with the organisation.

## **11. Recruiting staff**

FISAF Australia puts child safety and wellbeing at the centre of recruitment and screening processes for staff. We only recruit staff who are appropriate to engage with children.

Team members who will engage with children backstage and in warm-up areas must have a current Working with Children Check.

## **12. Supporting staff**

FISAF Australia assists its staff to incorporate child safety considerations into decisions and to promote a safe environment where children are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

Staff will receive supervision to support their engagement with children and for compliance with our Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct, and Grievance Policy.

## **13. Complaints and reporting**

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

FISAF Australia has a Grievance policy that includes information for staff, parents, coaches, and volunteers about how a complaint or child safety concern will be responded to.

If a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, then staff at FISAF Australia must report it in accordance with the Grievance Policy. FISAF Australia staff are required to prioritise children's safety in any response and to report all potentially criminal conduct to the Police. Under the complaint handling and disciplinary policies, staff may be subject to actions to support child safety including:

- being stood down during an investigation or terminated following an investigation
- having their duties altered so they do not engage with children at FISAF Australia
- not allowing unsupervised contact with children at FISAF Australia
- removing their access to the FISAF Australia IT systems and facilities.

Complaints can be emailed to [admin@fisafaustalia.com.au](mailto:admin@fisafaustalia.com.au) or by phoning (07) 3823 6705.

*If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child at a FISAF Australia event, immediately inform a FISAF Australia staff member, or call Police on 000.*

#### **14. Record keeping**

FISAF Australia is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely and kept by FISAF Australia for at least 45 years.

#### **15. Information sharing**

FISAF Australia may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. FISAF Australia will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety.

#### **16. Risk management**

We recognise the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments operated by FISAF Australia.

We conduct regular risk assessments for each of our events. The risk assessments are will be developed in consultation with our staff, coaches, and venue operators. We will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the benefits of participating at FISAF Australia events. The Management Team is responsible for approving the risk assessments and any risk management plan developed.

Any contractors or other providers of services will always be supervised by a member of staff while working with us to ensure child safety. See also Code of Conduct above.

### **17. Non-compliance with this policy and the Code of Conduct**

FISAF Australia will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and any other child safety and wellbeing policies (see list below). Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action.

### **18. Review**

FISAF Australia will review all child safe practices and policies at least every two years. We also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or 'near miss'. Findings from reviews will be reported to the people involved in our organisation and also inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices. Reviews are overseen by the Management Team and will be informed by consultation with children, families and staff as appropriate.

### **19. Supporting documents – FISAF Australia child safety and wellbeing system**

The following policies, procedures and documentation work together to support child safety and wellbeing across all of our operations:

- Event Photography & Film Policy
- Event Information
- Participation Guidelines
- Grievance Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Conditions of Entry
- Participation Waiver.

### **20. Supporting Australian Child Protection Legislation**

This policy is supported by all state/territory child protection legislation as amended from time to time, a summary of which is available at:

<https://aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/australian-child-protection-legislation>.