

Creating Child Safe Environments is

..more than just police checks!

December 2014

The *Children's Protection Act 1993* requires sport and recreation organisations that provide services wholly or partly for children to establish and maintain a child safe environment and ensure appropriate reporting of child abuse and neglect. These organisations **must** have lodged a compliance statement with the Department for Education and Child Development around their policies and procedures for a child safe environment

For State Associations that have lodged a compliance statement on behalf of all affiliated organisations it is vital that information regarding the obligations of a child safe environment is regularly delivered to these organisations to ensure children's safety remains a key priority.

For State Associations that have not lodged a compliance statement on behalf of all affiliates then it is important these organisations are provided with the information and support to undertake this obligation and understand the requirements.

Emphasis is often placed on the need for relevant history assessments (police checks/screenings) for those who work in prescribed positions but organisations risk losing focus on other vital components of keeping a safe environment for children.

Although relevant history assessments are an obligation under the Act it is important to recognise that this is only one small part towards maintaining an environment that minimises risk for children.

Under the *Act* every organisation/club **must**:

- develop a risk management plan addressing the safety of children with respect to other people within the organisation
- have a child safe policy or a member protection policy which addresses the child safe obligations
- have guidelines and procedures that support the policy have codes of conduct with respect to children
- understand their relevant history assessment obligations
- consider clear recruitment procedures for staff and volunteers eg. Referee checks, qualification checks if applicable
- provide staff and volunteers with information or training around child safe environments, and provide support in their roles
- encourage the participation of children in decision making (let them have a say or provide feedback)
- ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of their mandated notification obligations

What can you do?

Most Associations have a Member Protection policy which affiliated organisations must adopt through the affiliation agreement. It is important that this policy is regularly referred to and highlighted in communication with affiliates. Ensure all policies are available on the Association website and recommend that affiliates also post them on their individual sites.

We recommend your clubs have a child safe officer to assist with educating clubs about child safe environments. They should promote the policy and develop procedures for their organisations to promote child safety.

Supporting clubs to recognise the importance of building a positive club culture can have an impact on the safety and wellbeing of all members. It can help grow the participation and positive outcomes for clubs that take ownership of their culture and identify opportunities to change.

STARCLUB, Play by the Rules, and programs such as **Fair Enough** and **Coloured Shirt** can support clubs to achieve a positive environment.



The Office for Recreation and Sport has recently launched a new website. Information to support the establishment of a child safe environment may be found on: www.ors.sa.gov.au/create_a_child_safe_environment

Further information to support your association is also available at: www.ors.sa.gov.au/sport_and_recreation/managing_your_club_or_association