



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTENT

Sydney Uni Sport & Fitness (SUSF) is firmly committed to the protection of children and young people. In accordance with legislation and principles for child protection and intervention, this Policy:

- aims to assist our personnel in recognising and reporting child abuse; and
- set out SUSF's requirements in relation to acceptable and unacceptable behaviours and practices when dealing with children (under 16 years) and young people (aged 16-17 years).

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, athletes, coaches, club officials, sub-contractors, contractors, subcontractors, employees of contractors or subcontractors, labour-hire employees, work experience students and volunteers of SUSF (SUSF Personnel). This policy relates to the responsibilities of SUSF Personnel in relation to the welfare of children (under 16 years) and young people (aged 16-17 years) in the course of their work or when representing SUSF.

This Policy applies to SUSF Personnel in the following circumstances:

- when dealing with children or young people in the course of delivering and managing SUSF activities and programs or at SUSF-related events;
- when dealing with children or young people who attend or have previously attended SUSF activities (including outside of work);
- when performing any duties in connection with work, even if such duties are performed outside normal working hours or away from their usual place of work (for example, when travelling to the UniSport Nationals);
- during work activities (for example, when engaging with customers or other personnel);
- at work related events, even if such events are held away from their usual place of work (for example, networking events and/or social functions); and
- when engaging on social media platforms in any way that has a connection or potential connection with SUSF, SUSF Personnel or customers (for example, on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram).

All SUSF Personnel have obligations in relation to child protection and intervention. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action (up to and including termination of employment or engagement).

3. CHILD PROTECTION

Key responsibilities

All SUSF Personnel are required to:

- Report any allegations or reasonable suspicions of child abuse against any other person (including other SUSF Personnel) in accordance with this Policy and legislative requirements.
- Comply with and demonstrate awareness and understanding of this Policy and the responsibilities arising from it.



- Provide SUSF with all documentation required for SUSF to comply with legislative requirements regarding Working with Children Checks and other child protection obligations.
- Demonstrate awareness of the magnitude and importance of the issue of child protection in a sport and recreation environment.
- Demonstrate awareness of the definitions and indicators of child abuse, and participate in training and other actions by SUSF to support this knowledge.
- Comply with any directions or guidelines issued by SUSF from time to time in relation to child protection, including a request to participate in an investigation into alleged conduct.
- Be conscious of the need for confidentiality, sensitivity and discretion when reporting allegations. The confidentiality of all parties must be considered i.e.: the victim/s, the individual/s making the allegation and the alleged offender/s.

Working with Children Checks

NSW legislation aims to reduce the risk of abuse to children by establishing the Working with Children Check. This Check is a screening mechanism to reduce the likelihood that unsuitable people become engaged in child-related work (i.e. work that involves physical or face-to-face contact with children or young people, whether paid or unpaid). The Check includes a national police check and review of findings of misconduct involving children. SUSF requires all SUSF Personnel involved in child-related work to undergo this check in order to comply with legislative requirements. SUSF may at its discretion ask SUSF Personnel not directly involved in child-related work to also undergo this check.

Prior to commencing employment or engagement, all prospective SUSF Personnel must provide SUSF with their existing clearance number or obtain a new clearance number. This includes all employees in child-related roles, including those working in supervised environments such as teams or groups. Certain exemptions apply under the legislation.

If any existing or prospective SUSF Personnel do not obtain a clearance under the Working with Children Check, SUSF will not engage that person in child-related work or will remove them from such work.

Human Resources is responsible for administering Working with Children Check procedures as they relate to SUSF Personnel.

Defining child abuse

Child abuse

Child abuse can occur when a person does something harmful to a child or young person, or does not provide for or protect, a child or young person. Child abuse can cause long-lasting emotional, physical and behavioural damage.

Sport and recreation is a particularly vulnerable area for potential child abuse because it:

- involves a large number of people under the age of 18;
- can involve overnight activities and trips without parental supervision (such as training camps or competitions); and



- often involves close relationships between adults and children/young people, where the adults are in positions of trust and able to assert authority and power over children/young people.

There are differing types and degrees of child abuse that can create serious setbacks to a child's enjoyment of, and participation in, sport and recreation activities.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the non-accidental injury to a child/young person by a parent, caregiver or another person.

Sexual abuse

Child sexual abuse is any sexual act or sexual threat imposed upon a child/young person. Adults who commit child sexual abuse exploit the dependency and immaturity of children/young people. Pressure, either physical or psychological, is usually present in child sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse encompasses a range of behaviours that can destroy the confidence of a child/young person and result in significant emotional deprivation or trauma. Emotional abuse involves the impairment of a child's social, emotional, cognitive and intellectual development and/or disturbance of a child's behaviour.

Neglect

Neglect occurs when a child/young person is harmed by the failure of a parent, caregiver or another adult person to provide them with the basic physical and emotional necessities of life, e.g. food, clothing, shelter, emotional security, medical care and adequate supervision. Neglect is characterised as a continuum of omissions in caregiving.

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is violence, abuse and/or intimidatory behaviour perpetrated by one person against another in a personal, intimate relationship causing fear, physical and or psychological harm. Domestic violence has a profound effect on children/young people and constitutes a form of child abuse.

Indicators of child abuse

Due to the nature of certain sport and recreation activities, several injuries which appear on the list of common indicators of abuse may in fact be a result of regular sport or recreational activities, e.g. sprains, bruising, dislocations. However, possible indicators of child abuse which SUSF Personnel should take note of include:

- bruising, particularly in the face, head or neck region;
- multiple bruises or injuries, e.g. burns, scalds, sprains, dislocations and fractures;
- injuries left untreated;
- differing versions of how an injury occurred;
- a child who refers to someone else being abused may in fact mean him/herself;
- sexual behaviour which is inappropriate for the age of the child;



- a high level of distrust of other people by a child;
- an extreme inability to relate well to adults and/or children;
- extreme attention-seeking behaviour, disruptive or aggressive behaviour and bullying; or
- seeking indiscriminate or inappropriate adult affection.

Note: SUSF Personnel should be aware that the presence of one indicator alone does not necessarily mean that a child has been the victim of abuse. Other factors that may have resulted in any of the above injuries or factors must be taken into consideration, along with the context in which these indicators are observed.

Children with a disability

Some children/young people with a disability may be at a higher risk of abuse due to the nature of their disability, such as mobility constraints. Limitations created by the disability may make them more dependent on others to stop the abuse from occurring.

SUSF Personnel should be careful not to discount indicators of child abuse in people with a disability as being related to the disability. If a significant change in a child's behaviour is accompanied by a range of indicators, possibly with a sexual component, serious consideration should be given to whether there are reasonable grounds to suspect child abuse.

Notification procedures

Emergency contact

If you believe a child or young person is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, contact the NSW Police immediately by dialling 000.

Mandatory reporting

SUSF Personnel who:

- (a) have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm; and
- (b) those grounds arise during the course of or from their work at SUSF; have a duty to report these concerns.

SUSF has identified relevant Mandatory Reporter Contacts (see below) to assist with this reporting. These contacts can also be contacted to discuss matters where you are unsure of the appropriate response or level of seriousness.

What is meant by "significant" in the phrase "to a significant extent" is that which is sufficiently serious to warrant a response by a statutory authority, irrespective of a family's consent. What is significant is not minor or trivial, and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child's or young person's safety, welfare, or wellbeing. In the case of an unborn child, what is significant is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child.

You do not need to be certain about the matters you propose to report, however, your concerns should be well founded and based on reliable information. The concern may relate to an individual child/young person or a class



of children/young people (for example, a group of children who all attend the same program). If you are in any doubt, the safest course is to report your concerns to one of the Mandatory Reporter Contacts listed below.

SUSF Personnel must report the matter within 24 hours of becoming aware of the suspected child abuse. Reports may include, but are not limited to, current concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child or young person for any of the following reasons:

- self-reported attempted, threatened or planned self-harm or suicide;
- the basic physical or psychological needs of the child or young person are not being met (neglect);
- the parents or caregivers have not arranged necessary medical care (unwilling or unable to do so);
- risk of physical or sexual abuse or ill-treatment (physical or sexual abuse);
- a parent or caregiver's behaviour towards the child causes or risks psychological harm (emotional abuse);
- incidents of domestic violence which result in a child being at risk of serious physical or psychological harm (domestic or family violence); and/or
- cumulative harm (an accumulation of a single adverse circumstance or event, or by multiple different circumstances and events).

All SUSF Personnel should be conscious of the need for confidentiality and discretion when reporting allegations. The confidentiality of all parties must be considered i.e.: the victim/s, the individual/s making the allegation and the alleged offender/s.

Mandatory Reporter Contacts

At SUSF, our Mandatory Reporters Contacts include the following members of staff:

School Holiday Program

Programs & Participation Manager, Matt Rennick, m.rennick@sport.usyd.edu.au or 9351 4987

Swim School

Swim School Manager, Kellie Warren, k.warren@sport.usyd.edu.au or 9351 8735

Legal

Natalie Brown, Legal Counsel, n.brown@sport.usyd.edu.au or 9351 4960.

Please note that Mandatory Reporter Contacts may be amended from time to time and can be found on [The Hub](#)

Once a report form has been submitted by the Mandatory Reporter Contact, he or she will:

- Determine whether the report indicates "risk of significant harm". To help assess whether the child or young person is at risk of significant harm, the mandatory reporter should consult the Mandatory Reporting Guidelines (**MRG**). The MRG will help to determine if a report to the Child Protection Helpline is necessary. The MRG can be found at:
http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au/v1/reporting_children_at_risk/mandatory_reporter_guide
- Based on the MRG, the Mandatory Reporter Contact may need to respond by:
 - immediately reporting the matter to the Child Protection Helpline (132 111);
 - consulting with a professional or a relevant Child Wellbeing Unit (**CWU**) no later than the next business day;



- c. referring the matter (eg to other practitioners, specialists or schools); or
- d. documenting the matter and monitoring the situation. All documentation will be stored confidentially with Human Resources

4. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

These Standards do not represent a full statement of all behaviours and practices that may be unacceptable or inconsistent with the obligations of SUSF Personnel in relation to child protection. All SUSF Personnel must comply with these Standards and, in cases where conduct is not dealt with specifically by this document, conduct themselves consistently with the key responsibilities and good practice outlined below. These Standards supplement other policies standards which may apply to participants in activities and programs and SUSF Personnel with particular responsibilities, including (without limitation) the Staff Code of Conduct, Sporting Code of Conduct, Workplace Conduct Policy, Use of Communication Technology and Social Media Policy, Work Health & Safety Overarching Policy and the Staff Handbook - School Holiday Program.

Key responsibilities

SUSF Personnel are required to:

- Recognise that as an adult involved in a child-related role, you are in a position of power and influence over children and young people in your care, and that you must behave in a professional and appropriate manner to ensure that their safety and wellbeing is maintained.
- Maintain clear professional boundaries with children and young people, and their families.
- Where unsure about behavioural standards, seek guidance from SUSF managers.
- Be proactive and demonstrate sensitivity and awareness of this Policy.

Required behaviours and practices

The following behaviours reflect good practice and are required by SUSF of SUSF Personnel:

1. Always have another adult present when with a child or young person - for example, when conducting coaching or instruction, or supervising children or young people during transport or other activities outside of SUSF facilities. Make sure any one-on-one contact with a child or young person occurs in a location that is visible and accessible to others.
2. Ensure an appropriate level of supervision relative to child or young person's age, maturity, capabilities, level of experience and the nature of the activity and venue.
3. Develop routines and structures that have clear boundaries of acceptable and professional adult/child interaction. When acting as a mentor or coach to a child or young person, develop a relationship with clear professional boundaries that cannot be misinterpreted as a personal rather than a professional interest in the child or young person.
4. Account for the age and maturity of children and young people when planning activities, including events outside SUSF facilities.
5. Speak to children and young people with respect, courtesy, impartiality and sensitivity.
6. Limit any physical contact with a child or young person to that which is appropriate and professional, and which ensures that the child or young person feels comfortable (for example by shaking hands, or providing a congratulatory pat on the back). Be alert to cues about how comfortable they are in your proximity and respect individual needs for personal space. If you intend to make physical contact with participants as part of a coaching or similar activity, you should explain the activity and what you will do in advance.



7. Report concerns if you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm in accordance with this Policy, or if you have reason to suspect that another SUSF Personnel member has engaged in misconduct towards a child or young person.
8. Manage allegations (disclosures) of child abuse or related concerns through established processes and reporting lines to ensure there is due process and natural justice.
9. Be aware of how cultural norms, personal circumstances and the particular characteristics or vulnerabilities of a child may influence the interpretation of your behaviour towards a child or young person. Be especially sensitive when interacting with children who have a known disability or poor awareness of 'boundaries'.
10. Comply with all School Holiday Program policies when working in the SUSF School Holiday Program (see Staff Handbook – School Holiday Program).

Prohibited behaviours and practices

The following behaviours reflect unacceptable practice and are prohibited by SUSF. Some of these behaviours may also amount to criminal acts:

1. Leaving children/young people unsupervised or unattended in the course of your responsibilities with SUSF.
2. Doing things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as changing clothes, stretching or going to the bathroom.
3. Making discriminatory comments to or about children or young people on the basis of disability, gender, sexuality, age, race or other grounds of unlawful discrimination.
4. Public discipline, humiliation, or threatened or actual physical punishment of a child or young person.
5. Swearing at or in the presence of a child or young person, or using insulting, provocative, obscene, offensive, hateful or otherwise inappropriate language.
6. Engaging in a practice of cheek kissing or hugging a child or young person, such as in the form of a greeting or when congratulating a child or young person.
7. Undressing in front of children or young people.
8. Conversing about sexual matters with children or young people, or telling jokes of a sexual nature.
9. Having sexual relationships or engaging in sexual misconduct with or in the presence of a child or young person, including grooming behavior or child pornography.
10. Engaging in the bullying, harassment, assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child or young person, or any behavior that causes psychological harm to a child or young person.
11. Making sexually suggestive remarks or actions, obscene gestures or showing inappropriate photographs or videos to a child or young person, or deliberately exposing a child or young person to the sexual behaviour of others, including access to pornography.
12. Arranging activities or meetings alone with a child or young person that are not approved by SUSF and the relevant parent/caregiver.

Guidance on specific circumstances

Photography and camera usage

To ensure the proper safeguarding of children and young people, only authorised SUSF Personnel are permitted to take, publish or post photos or videos of children and young people on or within SUSF facilities or at SUSF-related events, such as carnivals and competitions (including on social media). Any photograph or video of children involved in SUSF-related events must not be take, published or posted without parental consent.



SUSF's consent must be provided before any non-authorized SUSF Personnel is permitted to take, publish or post such photos or videos of children or young persons. In order to obtain such consent, the relevant SUSF Personnel must contact the Legal Counsel at n.brown@sport.usyd.edu.au.

Alcohol and drugs

SUSF Personnel must not condone, in any way, children or young people obtaining or consuming alcohol, cigarettes, illicit substances or non-prescription drugs. If you become aware or suspect that a child or young person has engaged in such behaviour, you should immediately notify your Senior Manager in relation to your concerns.

Medical conditions and allergies

SUSF has in place processes for obtaining medical information about children and young people who participate in SUSF programs and activities in order to ensure that matters such as allergies and medical conditions are known by suitable personnel. SUSF Medical Consent Forms are required for all participants, including children and young people.

SUSF Personnel must comply with any SUSF directions in relation to the storage and possession of medications, compliance with Medical Management Plans and associated matters. See also: School Holiday Program Medical Conditions Policy.

Collecting children after SUSF activities

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children/young people to and from SUSF activities. If it appears that you will be left alone with a child or young person (for example at the end of training), you should ask another member of SUSF Personnel to remain present with you until the child is collected.

SUSF Personnel should refuse or challenge any person who arrives to collect a child or young person who is not recognised or authorised to collect the child or young person.

See also: School Holiday Program Delivery & Collection of Children Policy.

Travel and transport outside of SUSF facilities

When children or young people need to be transported by SUSF Personnel, you should ensure that:

- there is more than one adult accompanying the group or in the relevant vehicle at all times; and
- the arrangement is known and approved in advance by SUSF and, where appropriate, by parents/caregivers in writing. This approval from parents/caregivers must be sent to the SUSF Personnel's Manager.

Grooming behaviour

Grooming behaviour refers to a pattern of conduct that is consistent with preparing a child or young person for sexual activity. It is a form of conduct that involves crossing professional boundaries, and is unacceptable practice that is prohibited by SUSF.

Grooming behaviours create a sense of a 'special' relationship with an individual child or young person. For example, this may involve the adult providing inappropriate gifts or favours, inappropriate additional time and attention, or inappropriate latitude to overstep rules that is not given to others. Grooming may also involve



conduct to test boundaries and the response of a child or young person to inappropriate physical contact or conduct - for example, by encouraging non-sexual physical contact, talking about sexual and intimate matters, 'accidental' intimate touching or undressing in front of a child. Grooming conduct may also overlap with other forms of unacceptable practice, such as inappropriate personal communications or social media contact that explores sexual or intimate feelings. An adult requesting that a child keep any aspect of their relationship secret or using tactics to keep any aspect of the relationship secret is characteristic grooming.

Social events

SUSF encourages a positive atmosphere and community to support and enrich our programs and activities for children and young people. SUSF may arrange or approve social events involving SUSF Personnel and children and young people, sometimes with their families and caregivers. It will generally be inappropriate for SUSF Personnel to attend social events or engagements with children or young people outside these approved events. This should only occur with the informed consent of the parent/caregivers and SUSF, which must be obtained in advance of SUSF Personnel attending the event or engagement.

Social Media and online communications

SUSF Personnel must not connect with, befriend, mention or communicate with children or young people via their personal social media or online channels.

See also: SUSF Use of Communication Technology and Social Media Policy

Reporting and further information

If any SUSF Personnel becomes aware of an actual or potential breach of this policy, this should be reported immediately to their Senior Manager.

For further information, please contact one of the Mandatory Conduct Reporters identified above or call the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111.



5. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Sporting Code of Conduct
- Use of Communication Technology and Social Media Policy
- Workplace Conduct Policy
- Work Health & Safety Overarching Policy
- Staff Handbook - School Holiday Program
- School Holiday Program Medical Conditions Policy
- School Holiday Program Delivery & Collection of Children Policy

6. ABOUT THIS POLICY

All individuals subject to this Policy are required to comply with its terms. However, to the extent this Policy describes benefits or entitlements provided by SUSF; these are discretionary in nature and are not intended to be contractual or binding on SUSF.

Subject	Child Protection Policy
Authorised by	Chief Executive Officer
Contact	Human Resources
Version	1.1
Commencement	01 March 2022
Next review	01 September 2023