



MOUNTAIN DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION

Teamwork . Inclusion . Community . Integrity . Respect.

MOUNTAIN DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION CHILD SAFE POLICY

Last updated: July 2023

Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the Board, staff, coaches, parents and volunteers of the Mountain District Netball Association (MDNA) – and its affiliated Clubs - to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices MDNA has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

Commitment to Child Safety

All children who are a part of MDNA have a right to feel and be safe.

The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and MDNA has a zero tolerance to child abuse. MDNA aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun, where activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

Application of this Policy

This policy was developed by MDNA in collaboration with the Board, staff and volunteers with specific reference to the Netball Australia Child Safeguarding Policy (1 January 2023) and Netball Victoria Child Safety guidelines and resources.

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 MDNA is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

MDNA 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 are involved in our programs 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

MDNA values diversity and does 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.
- Promote being an inclusive Association

Recruiting staff and volunteers

MDNA takes the following steps to ensure best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of Coaches and volunteers:

- Interview and conduct referee checks on all Coaches and volunteers
- Require Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements and as part of the induction process for volunteers.

Supporting staff and volunteers

MDNA seeks to attract and retain the best 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 coaches, parents and volunteers.

Please see Codes of Conduct available on the MDNA website.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The MDNA has appointed the Vice-President of the MDNA Board, or delegate, as Child Safety Officer (CSO) with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by coaches, volunteers, parents or children.

Online forms are available on the MDNA website for prompt reporting of any incident of concern.

The CSO can also be contacted directly via vp@mdnanetball.com.au

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse telephone 000.

The CSO will follow the guidelines put forward by the commission for children and young people in regards to reportable conduct as well as Netball Victoria Governance and Reporting guidelines relating to Child Safety Practices.

The CSO to report to police immediately if there is any report of sexual or physical abuse of a child. The CSO to communicate to the board a detailed written report of supplied information from the reporter including, who, what, when, where & why the incident is of concern. If the alleged perpetrator is a Board member, coach or team official they will be removed from their position until further notice.

Risk Management

MDNA recognises 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 Association.

Resources

Netball Australia Child Safeguarding Policy (1 January 2023)

<https://netball.com.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/INT011%20-%20Child%20Safeguarding%20Policy%20Version%201.1%201%20January%202023.pdf>

Netball Victoria Governance and Reporting Practices

<https://vic.netball.com.au/governance-reporting>

Commission for children and young people guidelines in regards to reportable conduct.

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/>