

Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Protection of Children

1.1 Child Protection

BSRV is committed to the safety and well-being of children and young people who participate in our Club's activities or use our services. We support the rights of the child and will act at all times to ensure that a child-safe environment is maintained. We also support the rights and well-being of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure and safe environment for all participants.

BSRV acknowledges the valuable contribution made by our staff, members and volunteers and we encourage their active participation in providing a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all participants.

1.1.1: Identifying and Analysing Risks of Harm

BSRV will develop and implement a risk management strategy, which includes a review of our existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe our organisation is; and to identify any additional steps we can take to minimise and prevent the risk of harm to children because of the action of an employee, volunteer or another person.

1.1.2: Developing Codes of Conduct for Adults and Children

We will develop and promote a code of conduct that specifies standards of conduct and care we expect of adults when they deal and interact with children, particularly those in our care. We will also implement a code of conduct to promote appropriate behaviour between children.

The codes will clearly describe professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behavior.

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1.1.3: Choosing Suitable Employees and Volunteers

BSRV will ensure that the organisation takes all reasonable steps to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children, especially those in positions that involve regular unsupervised contact with children. This may be achieved using a range of screening measures. Such measures will aim to minimise the likelihood of engaging (or retaining) people who are unsuitable to work with children.

BSRV will ensure that Working with Children Checks and criminal history assessments are conducted for employees and volunteers working with children, where an assessment is required by law. If a criminal history report is obtained as part of the screening process, BSRV will ensure that the criminal history information is dealt with confidentially and in accordance with relevant legal requirements.

1.1.4: Support, Train, Supervise and Enhance Performance

BSRV will ensure that all our employees and volunteers who work with children have ongoing supervision; support and training. Our goal is to develop their skills and capacity and to enhance their performance, so we can maintain a child-safe environment in our Club.

1.1.5: Empower and Promote the Participation of Children in Decision-Making and Service Development

BSRV will promote the involvement and participation of children and young people in developing and maintaining a child-safe environment in our Club.

1.1.6: Report and Respond Appropriately to Suspected Abuse and Neglect

BSRV will ensure that employees and volunteers are able to identify and respond appropriately to children at risk of harm and that they are aware of their responsibilities under state laws to make a report if they suspect on reasonable ground that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected (See Attachment 3).

In addition to any legal obligations, if any person believes that another person or organisation bound by this policy is acting inappropriately towards a child or is in breach of this policy they may make an internal complaint.

Any person who believes a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, should contact the police immediately.

1.2 Supervision

Children under the age of 18 must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. We endeavour to provide an appropriate level of supervision at all times. If a member finds a child under the age of 18 is unsupervised, they should assume responsibility for the child's safety until the child's parent/guardian or supervisor is located.

For reasons of courtesy and safety, parents must collect their children on time. If it appears a member will be left alone with just one child at the end of any club activity, they will ask another member to stay until the child is collected.

1.3 Transportation

Parents and/or guardians are responsible for organising the transportation of their children to and from Club activities (eg training programs). In the event we make arrangements for the transportation of children (eg for trips away), we will conduct a risk assessment that includes ensuring vehicles are adequately insured, the driver has a current and appropriate licence for the vehicle being used and the appropriate safety measures are in place (eg fitted working seatbelts).

1.4 Taking Images of Children

Images of children cannot be used inappropriately or illegally. We require that members, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent or guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own. We will also make sure that the parent or guardian understands how the image will be used.

To respect people's privacy, we do not allow camera phones, videos and cameras to be used inside changing areas, showers and toilets which we control or are used in connection with our Club.

When using a photo of a child, we will not name or identify the child or publish personal information, such as residential address, email address or telephone number, without the consent of the child's parent or guardian. We will not provide information about a child's hobbies, interests, school or similar, as this can be used by paedophiles or other persons to "groom" a child.

We will only use images of children that are relevant to our Club's activities and we will ensure that they are suitably clothed in a manner that promotes our Club. We will seek permission from a child's parent or guardian before using their images.