



Child Safety Policy as at 1 July 2022

Approved By: HYC Committee 22 August 2022

Date for Review: 30 June 2023

Purpose

This policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of the Committee and members of the Hastings Yacht Club Inc (**the Club**) to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices the Club has developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

Commitment to Child Safety

All children who attend activities or visit the Club have a right to feel and be safe. The safety of the children in our care will always be our first priority and the Club has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The Club provides an environment where children feel safe and have fun and the Club's activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

Application of this Policy

This policy was developed by the Club Committee in collaboration with HYC members and updated in July 2022 to reflect recent Victorian Government legislative changes.

This policy applies to all individuals attending Club activities (paid and volunteer) including, but not limited to:

- The HYC Committee
- All HYC members, their families and guests
- Administrators
- Coaches / Trainers
- Sail training / racing participants
- Parents
- Spectators
- Visitors

Roles and Responsibilities

All of the people to which this policy applies have a role and responsibilities 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 Safety Representatives

To assist with the oversight and management this policy, the Club will have at least two Child Safety Representatives (CSR), one of whom will be a member of the Committee. So the CSR can be readily identified, the CSR photos and contact details are to be clearly posted on noticeboard at the Club and on the Club website.

The CSR are responsible to:

- advise and assist children and their parents about HYC child safety matters
- advise adults planning or participating in Club events about child safety matters
- investigate any complaints relating to child safety / welfare and report any proven misconduct to relevant authorities

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 the Club is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

Children's Rights to Safety and Participation

The Club 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 use the Club 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 that children, or their parents, raise with us.

Valuing Diversity

We value diversity and do 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 other culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families;
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation in all Club activities, and particularly through our Sailability program.

Screening volunteers

The Club takes the following active steps to ensure best practice standards in the screening of volunteers:

- Interview and conduct referee checks on volunteers
- Require Working with Children Checks for relevant positions who work with children on a regular basis, in particular Sailability or other sailing training.
- Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in the induction process for new members.

Supporting Members

The Club seeks to attract and retain members. We provide support and supervision so all people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. The HYC Code of Conduct provides guidance to members on all aspects of expected behaviour and conduct at the Club.

Risk Management

We recognise 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 children. To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults to whom this policy applies should avoid direct, unsupervised contact with children. There should always be at least two-adults in attendance when children are present at the Club. In particular, child safety risks must be managed in any Club activities:

- using change room facilities;
- using accommodation or overnight stays;
- involving travel; or
- requiring physical contact when coaching or managing children.

Reporting a child safety concern, complaint or incident

Any incident at the Club, where there are allegations of child abuse or concerns for child safety will be investigated promptly and thoroughly by one of the CSR, or another appropriate independent person appointed by the Committee. A HYC Incident Investigation Report Template is attached to this policy. The appointed Investigating Officer (IO) will, as soon as possible, but within 48-hours:

- Confirm the nature and details of the complaint
- Ensure the immediate safety and welcome of the complainant
- Ensure the parents or guardian are aware
- Ascertain the key facts relating to the allegations
- Obtain evidence from the complainant, respondent and any witnesses
- Prepare a brief report with a summary of the complaint, key evidence, conclusions and recommendations
- At all times, handle the complaint with sensitivity and confidentiality, only communicating with those who need-to-know

Reasonable belief: When a CSR or any other HYC member becomes concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a reasonable belief. A ‘reasonable belief’ or a ‘belief on reasonable grounds’ is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same ground.

Non-compliance with this policy and the Code of Conduct

The Club will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and any other child safety and wellbeing policies (see list below). Alleged breaches by anyone will be investigated in accordance with the process listed above and may result in suspension or termination of Club membership or for more serious cases, referral to relevant civil authorities including Child First/Orange Door, DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be formally reviewed every year and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers and volunteers involved in the Club.

Supporting legislation

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)* (including Child Safe Standards) (See Attachment)
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* (including reporting to Child Protection)
- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)* (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- *Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)* (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)

Child Safe Standards as at 1 July 2022

1. Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
3. Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
4. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
5. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
6. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.
8. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
9. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
10. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
11. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

**Hastings Yacht Club
Child Safety Incident Report**

Investigator Name:		Report Date:	
Incident Date:		Incident Time:	
Complainant(s) Name:		Respondent(s):	

Summary of Allegations:

Witness 1 Name:		Witness Phone:	
Witness 1 Evidence:			
Witness 2 Name:		Witness Phone:	
Witness 2 Evidence:			
Witness 3 Name:		Witness Phone:	
Witness 3 Evidence:			
Witness 4 Name:		Witness Phone:	
Witness 4 Evidence:			
Respondent Evidence:			

Conclusions:

Recommendations:

**Reviewer Name &
Position:**

Date:

Decision / Actions: