

## **CHILD SAFE POLICY**

**This Policy must be read in conjunction with the  
GA Member Protection Policy**

<b>Date of Approval:</b>	<b>23 April 2020</b>
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## REVIEW HISTORY TABLE

This Child Safe Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis. Some circumstances may trigger an early review, this includes but is not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the Board and/or Chief Executive Officer. Gymnastics Australia (GA) retains records to document each review undertaken. Records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

Revised in	Version	Date Endorsed	Approved by	Content reviewed/Purpose
	1	27/3/2019	GA Board	Policy Developed
February 2020	2	24/4/2020	GA Board	Annual review minor changes made and addition of the Flagging System requirements

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# Commitment Statement

GA is committed to the safety, wellbeing, and empowerment of all Children accessing our programs and services including indigenous children, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Children with disability.

GA and all our Association Members have a zero tolerance approach to any form of child abuse. We support the rights of children and we will act immediately to ensure an environment is maintained where children and all participants feel safe, respected, valued and empowered at all times.


Our commitment encompasses the rights and wellbeing of our Personnel, Members, contractors and volunteers and requires their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants. We also acknowledge these groups and individuals provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport. GA and all Association Members will continue to take measures to protect the safety and welfare of children by embedding child safety in our sport's culture.

We know that being a leading child safe organisation is about more than having the right policies and procedures in place. It requires conscious action and proactive behaviours to protect children from harm. It means creating a culture of safety that extends from participation and education through to ensuring all members feel safe and secure in reporting inappropriate behaviour.

It is essential that everyone involved in gymnastics; our Affiliated Clubs, administrators, volunteers, parents and participants understand the important responsibilities they have in relation to child safety and we are committed to educating our community in this regard.

Together we can provide an environment where children feel safe, respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

The President of GA, alongside the Presidents of all our Association Members, hereby sign this Child Protection Commitment Statement on the sixteenth of August, two thousand and nineteen.



**Sam McKay**  
President



## Our Personnel's Commitment to Child Safety

Gymnastics Australia (GA / we / our / us) is committed to safeguarding Children in its care. As part of this commitment, we have developed practice and behaviour guidelines for GA, and these are approved and endorsed by our Board and GA CEO.

All our Personnel, our Board of Directors and volunteers, are required to observe our practice and behaviour guidelines. When any Personnel and volunteers commence with GA, they are required to sign this Child Safety Commitment Statement.

Management considers a failure to observe our guidelines to be misconduct that may result in disciplinary action. Depending on the seriousness of the misconduct, disciplinary action may include suspension while matters are investigated and/or dismissal. In addition to any internal disciplinary proceedings, any breaches of law will be reported to police or other relevant authority.

### Commitment

I, \_\_\_\_\_

Name of GA Personnel or volunteer

- (a) have been provided with a copy, read, and understood the GA Child Safe Policy and the GA Member Protection Policy;
- (b) have been provided with a copy, read, and understood the GA Codes of Behaviour (in the Member Protection Policy);
- (c) understand my responsibilities in relation to ensuring and promoting the safety of Children;
- (d) will observe obligations set out in the Member Protection Policy and the Child Safe Policy during my engagement with GA to ensure and promote the safety of Children participating in activities provided by GA; and
- (e) understand that I must report any criminal conviction or charge prior to and subsequent to my engagement that indicates that I may present a potential risk to the children

Name and Signature of GA Personnel or volunteer

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Signature of management representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Position/title of management representative

\_\_\_\_\_

## 1. INTRODUCTION

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This Policy is part of GA's proactive and preventative approach to uphold its commitment to the safety, wellbeing, participation and empowerment of all Children who access our activities, programs, services or facilities. It is important to acknowledge that historically over 90% of GA's athlete membership base is under the age of 12 (with a significant percentage of that cohort being under 5 years of age). Young children are particularly vulnerable to abuse and extremely reliant on the adults around them to provide a safe environment.

## 2. PURPOSE

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To show our commitment to ensuring we do everything we can to have a child safe environment for all its Child Participants, GA has developed this Child Safe Policy as a separate but aligned document to the Member Protection Policy to ensure that we comprehensively address this prioritised focus. This Policy sits alongside and must be read in conjunction with the Member Protection Policy.

This Policy and its attachments outline GA's commitment to child safety and provides relevant information to protect our Children. It also seeks to ensure that Applicable Persons are aware of their key legal and ethical responsibilities as well as the standards of behaviour expected of them.

## 3. WHO IS BOUND BY THIS POLICY

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This Policy applies to anyone involved in the sport of gymnastics in Australia including (but not limited to) the following people (**Applicable Person / you / your / they / their**), whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity with GA:

- 3.1 persons appointed or elected to boards, committees and sub-committees;
- 3.2 employees, contractors and volunteers of GA;
- 3.3 Members of the National Gymsport Commissions;
- 3.4 support Personnel appointed or selected to teams and squads (e.g. managers, chaperones, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs);
- 3.5 coaches and assistant coaches;
- 3.6 Participants;
- 3.7 judges and other officials involved in the regulation of gymnastics in Australia;
- 3.8 Members;
- 3.9 Personnel participating in events and activities, including camps and training sessions, held or sanctioned by GA; and
- 3.10 any other person including spectators, parents/guardians; and  
the following organisations:
- 3.11 any Association Member and their members; and
- 3.12 any other organisations affiliated with GA.

This Policy will continue to apply to an Applicable Person even after they have stopped their association or employment with GA, if disciplinary action and/or allegations against that Applicable Person had commenced while they were a Member.

#### 4. ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

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Association Members are required to adopt and implement this Policy and to provide proof to GA of the approval of the policy by the relevant board in accordance with its constitution. Association Members must also undertake to ensure that Affiliated Clubs and individual Members are bound by this Policy and are made aware of this Policy.

GA, Association Members and Affiliated Clubs must:

- 4.1 adopt, implement and comply with this Policy;
- 4.2 make such amendments to their constitution, rules or policies necessary for this Policy to be enforceable;
- 4.3 publish, distribute and promote this Policy and the consequences of breaches;
- 4.4 promote and model appropriate standards of behaviour at all times;
- 4.5 promptly deal with any breaches or complaints made under this Policy in a sensitive, fair and timely manner;
- 4.6 apply this Policy consistently;
- 4.7 recognise and enforce any penalty imposed under this Policy;
- 4.8 ensure that a copy of this Policy is available or accessible to the persons and associations to whom this Policy applies;
- 4.9 use appropriately trained people to receive and manage complaints and allegations (Member Protection Information Officers (**MPIOs**)); and
- 4.10 monitor and review this Policy at least annually.

In this policy, any powers or responsibilities of GA shall be read as powers of the relevant association member or affiliated club and any powers or responsibilities of the GA CEO (or delegate) shall be read as powers of the authorised person of the relevant association member or affiliated club, in the case of allegations being handled at a state / territory or club level.

#### 5. INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

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Individuals bound by this Policy are responsible for:

- 5.1 completing a Member Protection Declaration set out in Part C of the Member Protection Policy;
- 5.2 making themselves aware of this Policy and complying with its standard of behaviour;
- 5.3 placing the safety and welfare of Children above other considerations and in line with this Policy and the Member Protection Policy;
- 5.4 being accountable for their behaviour;
- 5.5 not making false, misleading or vexatious claims against any other Member or person;
- 5.6 following the procedures outlined in this Policy if they wish to make a complaint or report a concern about possible child abuse, discrimination, harassment or other inappropriate behaviour; and

- 5.7 complying with any decisions and/or disciplinary measures imposed under this Policy.

The GA Board is responsible for the endorsement of the GA Child Safe Policy. It delegates the development and implementation of this Policy to the GA CEO.

## 6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

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The following GA policies must be considered in relation to this Policy:

- 6.1 Member Protection Policy
- 6.2 Codes of Behaviour (within this Policy and the Member Protection Policy)
- 6.3 International Travel Policy
- 6.4 Photography Policy

## 7. COMMUNICATION

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GA commits to ensuring this Policy (and any updates or changes) is communicated:

- 7.1 on our website [www.gymnastics.org.au](http://www.gymnastics.org.au);
- 7.2 in age-accessible formats for Children;
- 7.3 during recruitment and induction processes;
- 7.4 at all GA run events and competitions; and
- 7.5 in training on child safe policies and procedures.

## 8. WHAT IS A BREACH OF THIS POLICY

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It is a breach of this Policy for any person or organisation to which this Policy applies, to do anything contrary to this Policy.

## 9. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

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If, when following the “Procedure for Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations” (**Attachment A** - which also refers to the process outlined in the Member Protection Policy), it is found that an individual or organisation, to which this Policy applies, breaches this Policy, one or more forms of discipline may be imposed. Please refer to section 1.10 and 1.11 of **Part A** of the Member Protection Policy for examples of disciplinary measures that may be taken against individuals and/or organisations in these circumstances. Any breaches of law will be reported to police or other relevant authority.

## 10. POSITION STATEMENTS

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### 10.1 We are committed to the safety of Children

Through our Child Safe Policy we document our clear commitment to protecting Children from abuse and neglect. We communicate our commitment to all our Members and Personnel and give them access to a copy of this Policy.

### 10.2 We support and respect every child’s individual needs

GA supports and respects all Children, as well as our Personnel, Members and volunteers. GA promotes diversity and tolerance in its organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome.



GA:

- (a) promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Indigenous Children;
- (b) promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
- (c) ensures that Children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

### 10.3 **Our Members and Personnel know the behaviour we expect**

- (a) We ensure that Applicable Persons (including, but not limited to, those involved in the delivery of gymnastic services, programmes and events involving Children understand their role and the behaviour we expect in relation to protecting Children from abuse and neglect.
- (b) We utilise clear position descriptions which clearly state relevant child safety requirements.
- (c) We have a Codes of Behaviour, that is approved and endorsed by the GA CEO and Board that outlines our expectations for behaviour towards Children.
- (d) Our Technical Members and Personnel are given a copy of and have access to the Codes of Behaviour.
- (e) Our Members and Personnel acknowledge, electronically or in writing, that they have read and are committed to the Codes of Behaviour. Refer to **Attachment K** of this Policy and **Part B** of the Member Protection Policy for a copy of the codes.

### 10.4 **We minimise the likelihood of recruiting a person who is unsuitable**

- (a) GA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with Children (in prescribed positions). 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.
- (b) Please refer to section 11 of this Policy for detailed information regarding GA's screening and working with children check policy.

### 10.5 **Induction, training, ongoing support and supervision is part of our commitment**

- (a) We provide all new Members and Personnel with information during their membership affiliation and/or induction about our commitment to Child Safety including our Child Safe Policy, Codes of Behaviour and child abuse reporting process.
- (b) We have a process for ensuring all our required Members and Personnel complete Child safety training.
- (c) We support ongoing education and training for our Members and Personnel to ensure child safety information is provided and updated as required.
- (d) GA supports its staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision and management to:
  - (i) develop their skills to protect Children from abuse; and
  - (ii) promote the cultural safety of Indigenous Children, the cultural safety of Children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of Children with a disability.

Training and education is essential to ensure that Applicable Persons understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

GA will ensure that regular training and education on child abuse risks is provided to Personnel and Members.

#### 10.6 **We encourage the involvement of Children and their parents**

- (a) GA will promote the involvement and participation of Children in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.
- (b) GA involves Children when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. GA listens to their views and respects what they have to say.
- (c) GA provides information (such as brochures, posters, handbooks, guidelines) to Children and their carers about our commitment to the safety of Children and their rights, the behaviour we expect of our Personnel and of themselves and our policy about responding to child abuse.

#### 10.7 **Our Personnel understand their responsibility for reporting child abuse**

Our policy for responding to child abuse is approved and endorsed by the GA CEO and Board and applies to all our Members and Personnel.

This Policy states that:

- (a) Members and Personnel must meet all legislated mandatory reporting requirements;
- (b) Members and Personnel must follow the process outlined in this Policy when reporting abuse; and
- (c) failure to report is considered serious misconduct.

Our Members and Personnel have access to this Policy and understand the implications of this Policy for their role. We document any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding Child abuse and monitor responses to all allegations, disclosures or concerns.

#### 10.8 **We maintain and improve our policies and practices**

- (a) Our policies, procedures and practices seek to address risks to Child safety and to establish a Child safe culture and practices.
- (b) Our Child Safe policies and procedures are:
  - (i) accessible in forms that are easy to understand;
  - (ii) have been informed by stakeholder consultation; and
  - (iii) communicated to Children and their families, our Personnel and the public.
- (c) We are committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures and practices. We have assigned responsibility for maintaining and improving our policies and procedures to the GA CEO with ultimate approval required by the GA Board. The GA CEO may delegate responsibility to maintain and improve this Policy to any appropriately trained or experienced Personnel or external consultant from time to time as required.
- (d) We monitor our Members, Personnel and external providers to ensure appropriate practices and behaviours, and to ensure that policies are followed.

- (e) We communicate with our Members and Personnel to ensure that they understand our policies and that the policies are effective in and for gymnastics.
- (f) We require our Personnel to disclose convictions or charges affecting their suitability to work with Children and we review police records and working with children checks regularly. GA will maintain and update a risk management strategy, including a regular 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 actions of our Personnel, volunteer or another person.

## 11. SCREENING AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS

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We are committed to providing a safe environment for Children. As part of this, we will do everything we can to ensure we recruit Personnel and volunteers who do not pose a risk to Children. These standards must be met anytime an Applicable Person is being recruited to work with Children or provide a service where they will have unsupervised access to Children.

### 11.1 Recruitment Standards

Recruitment procedures must ensure:

- (a) our child safety commitment is communicated to potential applicants for positions;
- (b) child safe duties are part of all GA position descriptions;
- (c) child safe-related questions are included in all interviews;
- (d) a minimum of two professional reference checks are undertaken with child safe related questions asked;
- (e) screening checks are undertaken, including identity, criminal record, working with children checks and/or qualification checks;
- (f) to the extent permitted by law, screening of any previous disciplinary measures imposed by a past employer or contracting entity of another state/territory and/or governing body (e.g. checking the USA Gymnastics Permanently Ineligible Members list); and
- (g) GA will ensure that working with children checks and/or criminal history assessments are conducted for employees, contractors and volunteers working with Children, where an assessment is required by law.

### 11.2 Working with Children Checks

Working with children check laws aim to prevent people who pose a risk from working with Children as paid employees or volunteers. Working with children check laws are currently in place in all Australian states and territories.

These laws require individuals involved in areas such as sport and recreation to undertake a check to determine their suitability to work (in a paid or volunteer capacity) with Children. Employment screening and working with children checks can involve criminal history checks, signed declarations, referee checks and other appropriate checks that assess a person's suitability to work with Children. In some states this also involves reviewing relevant findings from disciplinary proceedings.

GA, as well as its Association Members and Affiliated Clubs, will meet the requirements of the relevant state or territory working with children check laws.

Individuals travelling with Children to another state or territory in a work-related capacity must comply with the screening requirements of that particular state or territory. For example, if an

Association Member or Affiliated Club takes under age participants into New South Wales for training camps, competition or other activities, those travelling with the teams must comply with NSW law.

The state working with children check requirements apply regardless of our national, state or club Member Protection Policy. Please see **Attachment E** of this Policy for the working with children check information specific to your state/territory.

### 11.3 **Police Checks**

GA may carry out a Police Check during the recruitment of any employee or volunteer. Police Checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. We retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision-making process.

GA requires that any person who works directly with Children who has resided overseas in the past 10 years for a period of more than 3 months will be required to complete an International Criminal Record check for each country of residence.

If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

### 11.4 **Working with children checks at GA Events**

Any person working or volunteering at a GA organised event who requires accreditation (e.g. coach, judge, chaperone, team manager, medical staff, administrator etc.) must provide GA with a current copy of their working with children check card/certificate in person when collecting their accreditation.

GA reserves the right to withhold accreditation if working with children check information is not provided or take any action it considers necessary in relation to the non-compliance by a person of any working with children check requirement.

Any person who does not present their working with children check and does not have the appropriate accreditation will not be allowed into restricted areas (e.g. competition floor, training centre, change rooms etc.) or given access to Children at the event.

If accreditation (e.g. guest accreditation) does not give access to restricted areas or areas where a person may access Child Participants then a working with children check may not be required. This will be determined by GA on an event by event basis depending on the event location and risks associated with each venue.

Unless required by law, or at the request of GA in its absolute discretion, spectators or Participants who are participating in the event will not be required to hold or present a working with children check.

In instances where a person is working or volunteering at a GA organised event across State borders, and who will be working with Children, it is that person's responsibility to obtain the appropriate clearance checks and / or screenings required for working with Children in the respective State or Territory in which they will be working or volunteering. The person must provide GA with a current copy of such clearance check or screening card / certificate when presenting at the relevant event in which they are working or volunteering.

### 11.5 **Storage of Working with Children Checks at GA Events**

All Technical Members are required to provide GA with their current working with children check details, and at GA's request, proof of age and/or identity. This information is stored securely on GA's Customer Relationship Management (**CRM**) system (iMIS). It is the responsibility of each Technical Member to provide GA with these details.

## 11.6 No WWCC Exemptions

The requirements in this section 11 are strictly applied. GA will therefore not accept police officer exemptions or other accreditation or credentials (such as non-practicing Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) cards or an Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (APHRA) registration).

## 11.7 WWCC Negative Notice

Any person required to hold a valid WWCC under this policy who is subject to any matter which has the potential to revoke/suspend/withdraw their WWCC or cause an interim Negative Notice or Negative Notice (or equivalent requirement), that person must immediately notify GA in writing and the GA CEO may take such action as necessary including (but not limited to) dismiss that person and/or revoke, suspend or add conditions to their technical membership or prohibit them from participating in GA activities.

## 12. FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse takes many forms and some types of abuse are more easily identifiable than others.

It is important to understand what these forms of abuse are to better understand how to identify, prevent and ultimately report it when required.

Form of Abuse	Definition
<b>Bullying</b>	<p>Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying can take many forms which are often interrelated and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Verbal</i> (name calling, put downs, threats);</li> <li>• <i>Physical</i> (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting);</li> <li>• <i>Social</i> (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating); or</li> <li>• <i>Psychological</i> (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional or psychological abuse</b>	<p>Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a Child does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a Child. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviours continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.</p>
<b>Family Violence</b>	<p>Family violence occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to Children. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a Child's life. Exposure to family violence places Children at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.</p>
<b>Grooming</b>	<p>Grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a Child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. The Child may be given special attention and, what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a Child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is</p>

	formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, in internet chatrooms, on social media or by other technological channels.
<b>Harm</b>	<p>Harm to a Child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.</p> <p>Harm can be caused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect;</li> <li>• sexual abuse or exploitation;</li> <li>• a single act, omission or circumstance; or</li> <li>• a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.</li> </ul>
<b>Neglect</b>	Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the Child with the necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water or medical attention to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available.
<b>Physical abuse</b>	Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a Child to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a Child. Physically abusive behaviour includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, excessive and physically harmful over training, and kicking. It also includes giving children harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a Child at risk of being hurt.
<b>Sexual abuse</b>	Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or a person of authority (e.g. who is older) involves a Child in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the Child for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a Child, engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching a child's genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse with a Child. Encouraging a Child to view pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse. Engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet is also considered sexual abuse.
<b>Sexual exploitation</b>	Sexual exploitation occurs when children are forced into sexual activities that are then recorded in some way and/or used to produce pornography. Such pornography can be in the form of actual photos or videos or published on the internet. Exploitation can also involve children who are forced into prostitution.

### 13. IDENTIFYING CHILD ABUSE

The following information relates to information about abuse of Children. You may find the content distressing or disturbing. We recommend seeking support from your supervisor, a colleague or friend if you feel overwhelmed. We strongly advise discussing how you feel with others to 'debrief.' Anyone under the age of 18 who is bound by this Policy should read the following section in consultation with a parent/guardian.

The table below includes indicators of child abuse that may include but are not limited to these signs. Some signs that a Child is experiencing abuse or violence are more obvious than others. Trust your instincts. Suspected abuse is enough of a reason to raise an issue with the relevant person or authority to determine how to handle the matter. You do not need proof.

### 13.1 Indicators of Child Abuse

Abuse Type	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	<p>Emotional abuse/psychological abuse may cause delays in physical, emotional or cognitive development. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delays in physical development</li> <li>• Failure to thrive</li> <li>• Speech disorders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stealing food</li> <li>• Staying at school or other activities outside hours and not wanting to go home</li> <li>• Lacks trust in other people</li> <li>• Reluctance to attend an activity at a particular club or organisation</li> <li>• Tired, lethargic, falling asleep at inappropriate times</li> <li>• Abuse of alcohol or drugs</li> <li>• Aggressive behaviour</li> <li>• Poor peer relationships</li> <li>• Indiscriminate with affection</li> <li>• Lack of social skills</li> <li>• Distress, e.g. frequent crying or apathy</li> <li>• Demonstrating fear of parent, caregiver or another adult</li> <li>• Attention or risk-taking behaviour</li> </ul>
<b>Family Violence</b>	<p>Indicators may be similar to other forms of abuse covered within emotional, physical or sexual abuse. These may be caused by direct or indirect abusive behaviour.</p>	<p>Behavioural indicators may be similar to those identified in other forms of abuse such as emotional, physical and or sexual abuse.</p>
<b>Neglect</b>	<p>When a Child has been neglected, you may notice that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suffer from frequent hunger or malnutrition</li> <li>• Have poor hygiene</li> <li>• Wear inappropriate clothing</li> <li>• Remain unsupervised for long periods of time</li> <li>• Lack proper medical attention</li> <li>• Fail to thrive</li> <li>• Experience abandonment by parents/carers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stealing food or clothing</li> <li>• Spending time at school or other external activities beyond the usual hours</li> <li>• Reluctance to attend an activity at a particular club or organisation</li> <li>• Tired or falling asleep at inappropriate times</li> <li>• Abuse of alcohol or drugs</li> <li>• Aggressive behaviour</li> <li>• Poor peer relationships</li> <li>• Indiscriminate with affection</li> <li>• Desire for adult affection</li> <li>• Poor emotional response / lack of expression or enthusiasm</li> <li>• Anxiety about being left</li> <li>• Frequent rocking and sucking behaviour</li> </ul>

<b>Physical Abuse</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bite marks, cuts, welts, scratches</li> <li>• Fractured bones</li> <li>• Poisoning</li> <li>• Internal injuries</li> <li>• Shaking injuries</li> <li>• Strangulation marks</li> <li>• Ingestion of alcohol and drugs</li> <li>• Dislocations</li> <li>• Head injuries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressing little or no emotion when hurt</li> <li>• Offering unlikely explanations for injuries</li> <li>• Wearing long-sleeved clothes on hot days (possibly to hide bruising or other injuries marking the body)</li> <li>• Demonstrating fear of particular care givers, other adults or children</li> <li>• Demonstrating a fear of their parents or a fear of going home</li> <li>• Being fearful when other children cry or shout</li> <li>• Being excessively friendly to strangers</li> <li>• Being passive and compliant</li> <li>• Being nervous, hyperactive, aggressive, disruptive</li> <li>• Telling someone that physical harm has occurred</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	<p>Many of the physical indicators of sexual abuse are only identifiable via a medical examination. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexually transmitted diseases</li> <li>• Semen in the vagina</li> <li>• Vaginal or anal injury or scarring</li> <li>• Injury to the penis or scrotum</li> <li>• Abrasions, tears and bruises to the vagina or anus</li> <li>• Chronic urinary tract infections or difficulty urinating</li> <li>• Bleeding from the anus or vagina</li> <li>• Often the first indication the child gives is when they tell a person whom they trust that they have been sexually abused</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent and age-inappropriate sexual activity</li> <li>• Sexual aggression towards younger or more naive children</li> <li>• Sexual invitations or gestures to older people</li> <li>• Sexual interaction involving animals or toys</li> <li>• Sexual promiscuity or prostitution</li> <li>• Regressive behaviour, such as bedwetting and speech loss</li> <li>• Challenging and aggressive behaviour</li> <li>• Fear of people of a particular type or gender</li> <li>• Suicidal and self-harm behaviour including self-mutilation, drug or alcohol abuse</li> <li>• Risk taking behaviour such as lighting fires</li> <li>• Cruelty to animals</li> <li>• Criminal activity</li> <li>• Frequent rocking, sucking and biting behaviour</li> </ul>



## 14. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

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GA has zero tolerance of child abuse and family violence and we will treat all allegations of child abuse and/or misconduct with or towards a Child seriously, consistently and with a high degree of sensitivity. GA acknowledges that every child has the right to be heard, protected and supported and to have their concerns managed appropriately and with sensitivity. GA will use its best endeavours to seek to resolve the concerns of the child and/or their family in accordance with this policy.

All Applicable Persons, paid or unpaid are required to identify, report, and respond immediately (or where reasonably practicable no later than before ending a shift) to any concerns, suspicions or incidents of, child abuse or misconduct with a child using the "Procedure for Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations" (refer to **Attachment A** of this Policy).

If a Child is at **imminent risk** of harm or in **immediate danger**, you must report the situation directly to 000.

GA will keep a register of any allegations regarding child abuse and/or misconduct with or towards a Child for the required period of time in accordance with privacy laws in the relevant State/Territory.

### 14.1 Prohibitions

Our policy prohibits all persons to whom this Policy applies from:

- (a) discussing any concerns or allegations with unauthorised persons – within or outside GA – such prohibition not being designed to limit, in any way, their rights and responsibilities to report their concerns or allegations, but rather as part of GA's commitment to ensuring privacy, confidentiality and natural justice; and
- (b) making deliberately false, misleading or vexatious allegations.

### 14.2 Obligations

Applicable Persons are obliged to raise any concerns they might have in relation to:

- (a) any contravention of this Policy;
- (b) breaches of GA's policies designed to protect Children – such as outlined in our Codes of Behaviour (in this Policy and the Member Protection Policy);
- (c) actions of Applicable Persons that contravene GA's policies or may otherwise have the potential to harm a Child.

### 14.3 Rights

Any person (including but not limited to Applicable Persons) retains the right to report directly to relevant authorities, such as police or Child protection agencies, any concerns they may have in relation to the safety and welfare of a Child, regardless of whether they have also reported that matter internally.

### 14.4 Handling Allegations

- (a) An allegation should be dealt with at the relevant level. Therefore, if an allegation relates to behaviour or an incident that occurred at the:
  - (i) Affiliated Club level or involves people operating at the Affiliated Club level, then the allegation should be reported to and handled by the relevant Affiliated Club in the first instance; or

- (ii) Association Member level or involves people operating at the Association Member level, then the allegation should be reported to and handled by the relevant Association Member in the first instance.
- (b) Only matters that relate to or occur at the national level, including any incidents that occur at a GA organised event, and the most serious cases from an Affiliated Club or Association Member level (as reasonably determined by GA at its discretion) should be referred to GA.
- (c) If an allegation is handled at an Affiliated Club or Association Member level, the relevant person(s) handling the allegation within the respective Affiliated Club or Member Association may contact the GA National Child Safety Co-ordinator (or similar role) who will provide guidance on handling the complaint in accordance with this Policy. For the avoidance of doubt, the guidance provided shall only relate to process under this Policy.
- (d) If a Respondent is 15 years or younger they must have a parent/guardian present during any part of the complaint process and that parent/guardian must be notified of any complaints concerning their child. If the Respondent is 16-18 years they may choose whether to have a support person present during any part of the complaint process.
- (e) All actions taken (or proposed to be taken) must be in compliance with **Attachment A** of this Policy. To the extent that Attachment A conflicts with the rest of this Policy, Attachment A prevails.

#### 14.5 Special Considerations

- (a) GA understands persons from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse. For example, people from some cultures may experience anxiety when talking with police and communicating in English may be a barrier for some.
- (b) GA requires Applicable Persons to be sensitive to these issues and meet people's needs where possible, such as having an interpreter present (who could be a friend or family member). For example, if an allegation of abuse involves an Indigenous Child, Applicable Persons need to ensure a culturally appropriate response.
- (c) Some Children with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident. For example, Children with hearing or cognitive impairments may need support to help them explain the incident, including through sign language interpreters. GA recommends seeking advice on communicating with people with a disability where required.

#### 14.6 Receiving an Allegation

In receiving a concern, or allegation of child abuse/misconduct with a child, Applicable Persons will immediately refer the matter to the relevant Affiliated Club, Member Association or GA as applicable who will make a determination, based on thorough criteria, as to whether the matter should be reported to the appropriate authority. The person handling the allegation shall not assess the validity of any allegation or concerns but rather listen to the Complainant, stay calm and supportive and act promptly to ensure the matter is dealt with appropriately and in accordance with this Policy.

For more detailed information on how to handle responding to and reporting all allegations of child abuse please refer to **Attachment A** of this Policy –*Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations*.

#### 14.7 Criminal Action relating to Child Abuse

If Applicable Persons involved in our organisation are charged with or investigated by police for criminal matters relating to child abuse placing Children at risk, the GA CEO may dismiss that person and/or revoke, suspend or add conditions to their technical membership.

#### 14.8 Other investigations relating to Child Abuse/Misconduct with a child

If GA is made aware that an Applicable Person(s) is being investigated (by the police or such other external authority, entity or organisation) or subject to a serious complaint that relates to child abuse and/or misconduct with or toward a child, whilst the allegation is being investigated the GA CEO (or delegate) may conduct a risk assessment using the Child Abuse Risk Assessment tool in Attachment I in this Policy to determine the level of risk and take any reasonable actions and/or provide recommendations to protect the safety and wellbeing of relevant persons in accordance with the relevant procedures for reporting and responding to child abuse allegations in Attachment A to this Policy.

#### 14.9 Anonymous complaints

In cases of Child abuse there can be many barriers that community members face when reporting. To help reduce these barriers GA acknowledges that at times an allegation of Child abuse may be made anonymously. Where possible all allegations should be encouraged to be made openly so the proper investigative processes can be followed. If a person still wishes to remain anonymous GA and the Member Association or Affiliated Club handling the complaint (as applicable) will support this decision.

When an anonymous complaint is received the person receiving the allegation should:

- (a) inform the Complainant that GA or the Member Association or Affiliated Club handling the complaint (as applicable) may not be able to take the necessary action without full details;
- (b) encourage the person sensitively to give their details;
- (c) ask the Complainant if they would be willing to be interviewed if an investigation is conducted;
- (d) ask if there are any witnesses that would be willing to speak to GA or the Member Association or Affiliated Club handling the complaint (as applicable) and record their details; and
- (e) ask the Complainant if there is a reason as to why they wish to remain anonymous and ask what could be done to support them.

Once an anonymous complaint has been made action must still be taken. Follow the *Procedure for Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations* (refer to **Attachment A** of this Policy) as far as is practicable. Where the complaint is anonymous, the steps that can be taken under **Attachment A** may be limited. However, it may still be appropriate to take some steps as part of an informal investigation such as:

- (a) checking to see if there have been any previous complaints about the Respondent;
- (b) speaking to the Affiliated Club / Member Association to see if there have been any previous or current misconduct issues about the Respondent (without disclosing the anonymous Complainant);
- (c) checking to see if the Respondent's working with children check details are current and valid;
- (d) speaking to police for advice;

- (e) engaging in proactive child safety education with the Affiliated Club or Member, employee or volunteer associated with the allegation (without disclosing the anonymous Complainant); or
- (f) seeking further advice from the National Child Safety Coordinator (or similar role).

#### 14.10 Recording Allegations of Child Abuse and/or Misconduct with a Child

GA expects all Association Members and Affiliated Clubs to keep records of all allegations of child abuse/ misconduct with a Child to ensure GA can better identify and respond to patterns of abuse and/or inappropriate behaviour.

The *Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation Form* (refer to **Attachment C** of this Policy) is to be used to document any allegation, suspicion, disclosure, incident or concern regarding child abuse to record observations and concerns as accurately as possible.

Perpetrators of abuse can move around to avoid detection so rigorous record keeping is essential. If the Respondent is a person to whom this Policy applies the Member Association and GA must be notified. Please refer to the *Procedure for Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations* (Refer to **Attachment A** of this Policy) for when you need to notify the appropriate person.

GA records all allegations and breaches of this Policy in a confidential electronic system that can only be accessed by restricted Personnel as part of our risk mitigation processes. To prevent access to these records by unauthorised persons, GA stores any documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a Child by having:

- (a) hard-copy documentation stored in a locked filing cabinet (or similar); and
- (b) soft copy documentation stored in a password-protected file.

We maintain and regularly monitor records of child abuse reports as part of our incident management processes to ensure that they are responded to effectively in accordance with this Policy and that requirements for reporting to external authorities are complied with. When recording allegations of Child abuse / misconduct involving a Child, the person handling the complaint should consider the alleged perpetrator's right to privacy and confidentiality as set out in 14.11 below.

Notwithstanding any other clause in this Policy, GA may establish and administer a system under which some or all the following information may be made available to Affiliated Clubs and Association Members (and any other persons or organisations as determined by GA) through one or more of GA's database systems (**Flagging System**):

- (c) any sanctions or provisional actions imposed on an individual under this Policy and whether they have served, or are currently serving, such sanction;
- (d) whether an individual has been found guilty of relevant criminal offences;
- (e) whether an individual:
  - (i) is currently under formal investigation and/or subject to provisional action(s);
  - (ii) has been subject to an unresolved disciplinary process under this Policy; or
  - (iii) has previously had one or more formal complaints lodged against them that, for whatever reason (withdrawn/no sanction/complaint not substantiated etc) did not result in a sanction; and
- (f) any other directly related information which GA, in its absolute discretion, considers relevant.

#### 14.11 **Legislative Requirements**

States and territories each have specific legislation regarding mandatory reporting and reportable conduct. Members and Personnel must adhere to their relevant state or territory legislation for reporting child abuse. Please refer to **Attachments F and G** for the relevant state or territory legislative reporting requirements.

When handling allegations of Child abuse / misconduct involving a Child, the person handling the Complaint should consider their legal obligations, and that of the organisation which they are representing, including without limitation, under relevant employment legislation, In these circumstances, the relevant organisation should consider seeking legal advice.

#### 14.12 **Confidentiality and Privacy**

GA expects all Applicable Persons to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged offender), except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the Child or the investigation of the allegation, or as provided for under the Flagging System.

#### 14.13 **Support**

When an allegation of child abuse has been made GA or the Member Association or Affiliated Club handling the complaint (as applicable) will offer support to all the persons involved (Complainant, Respondent, staff involved etc.) The designated person handling the complaint will take on the responsibility of offering support and making all necessary arrangements. The type of support offered will be assessed on a case by case basis.

For more detailed information on support that could be considered, please refer to Step 9 in **Attachment A**.

## 15. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
<b>Affiliated Club</b>	Means a club affiliated with GA and an Association Member, recognised by GA under clause 5.6 of the GA Constitution.
<b>Applicable Person</b>	Means any person to whom this Policy or the Member Protection Policy applies. Please refer to section 3 of this Child Safe Policy.
<b>Authorised Person</b>	Means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) in the case of allegations being handled at a national (GA) level, the GA CEO;</li> <li>b) in the case of allegations being handled at a state / territory level, the relevant Association Member CEO (or corresponding role); and</li> <li>c) in the case of allegations being handled by an Affiliated Club, the relevant Affiliated Club CEO (or corresponding role), or their delegated representative at each level.</li> </ul>
<b>Association Member (State/Territory Associations)</b>	Means an Association affiliated with GA, recognised by GA under clauses 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 of the GA Constitution.
<b>CEO</b>	Means Chief Executive Officer
<b>Child (or Children)</b>	Means a person(s) who is under the age of 18 years, (which, for the avoidance of doubt, includes young people under the age of 18 years), unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child.
<b>Code of Behaviour</b>	The Codes of Behaviour set out in this Policy and Part B of the Member Protection Policy.
<b>Complaint</b>	Means a complaint made under this Policy.
<b>Complainant</b>	Means a person making a complaint.
<b>Complaint Handler/Manager</b>	Means a person appointed under this Policy or the Member Protection Policy to investigate a Complaint.
<b>Director</b>	Means the Board of GA as constituted from time to time
<b>Handling Organisation</b>	Means the organisation who is handling the allegation
<b>Intersex</b>	Means a person with a variation in sex characteristics including chromosomes, gonads, or genitals that do not allow an individual to be distinctly identified as male or female.
<b>Member</b>	Means a member of GA as set out in clause 5 of the GA Constitution.
<b>Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)</b>	Means a person trained to be the first point of contact for a person reporting a complaint under, or a breach of, this Policy. He or she provides impartial and confidential support to the person making the complaint.
<b>Misconduct with a Child</b>	Means any behaviour that is not child abuse but is in direct breach of the Codes of Behaviour that relate to Children or any behaviour involving a Child that is inappropriate/places them at risk.
<b>Natural justice (also referred to as procedural fairness)</b>	Incorporates the following principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• both the Complainant and the Respondent must have a full opportunity to put forward their account of events, and be given details of what is being said against them;</li> <li>• reasonable time frames should be provided in the conduct of the investigation and hearing processes;</li> <li>• all relevant submissions must be considered;</li> <li>• no person may judge their own case;</li> <li>• the decision maker/s must be unbiased, fair and just; and</li> <li>• the penalties imposed must be fair.</li> </ul>
<b>Participant</b>	Means a person who participates in the Sport of gymnastics including, but not limited to, athletes.
<b>Personnel</b>	Means any GA employee or individual contractor

<b>Police Check</b>	Means a national criminal history record check conducted as a pre-employment, pre-engagement or current employment background check on a person.
<b>this Policy</b>	Means this Child Safe Policy
<b>Respondent</b>	Means the person who is the subject of a Complaint
<b>Technical Members</b>	Means any person registered as a coach or judge to an Association Member and GA under clause 5.8 of the GA Constitution.
<b>Vulnerable Person</b>	Means a Child who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

## ATTACHMENT A: PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

**NOTE:** the following procedure only relates to breaches of this Policy and/or the child safe Codes of Behaviour.

For all other breaches not related to child safety, please refer to the Member Protection Policy complaints handling process.

**IMPORTANT:** If you believe a child is in immediate danger or a life-threatening situation, contact the police immediately on **000**.

### Step 1: Receive the allegation

#### Step 1a: Receive the allegation from a Child

If a Child raises an allegation of child abuse or neglect that relates to them or to another child, it is important that you listen, stay calm and be supportive.

Do	Don't
<p><b>Be a listener not an investigator.</b></p> <p><b>Listen to the allegation or disclosure supportively, without dispute</b></p> <p><b>Let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred (encourage the child to talk using their language)</b></p>	<p>Do not express shock, panic, disbelief or judgement. Remain calm</p> <p>Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them.</p>
<p><b>Make sure you are clear about what the child has told you.</b></p> <p><b>Reassure the child that what has occurred is not his or her fault and that they are doing the right thing ("you are not in trouble" or "if I look or sound upset it is because I want you to feel safe")</b></p>	<p>Do not challenge or undermine the child.</p> <p>Do not ask suggestive or leading questions.</p> <p>Do not seek detailed information, ask leading questions or offer an opinion. Ask just enough to act protectively, such as, "Can you tell me more about that?" or just nod or say, "yes" to acknowledge you are hearing the child.</p>
<p><b>Try and discretely separate the child making the complaint from the other children and listen to them carefully</b></p> <p><b>Explain that other people may need to be told in order to stop what is happening in order to stop what is happening.</b></p>	<p>Do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe.</p> <p>Do not discuss the details with any person other than those detailed in these procedures</p>
<p><b>Promptly and accurately record the discussion in writing using the child's words on the "Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation Form" (Attachment C of this Policy) and then store the record securely.</b></p> <p><b>Report all allegations or concern to the nominated person as described in this Policy</b></p>	<p>Do not contact the Respondent.</p> <p>Tell the child that you may need to take some notes while they are talking to accurately record what they are saying.</p>



## Step 1b: Receive the allegation from an adult

If an adult says their child or another child has been abused or raises a concern regarding child abuse, it is important that you listen, stay calm and be supportive and ask about the wellbeing of the child.

Do	Don't
<b>Disregard factors such as the authority or position of the persons involved and any pre-existing views about the good character or otherwise, of any person involved or under investigation.</b>	Do not assess the validity of such allegations or concerns
<b>Provide reassurance that the organisation handling the allegation will take immediate action in response to the allegation</b>	Do not leave them with any doubt as to whether the complaint will be responded to
<b>Advise the adult that you will record the discussion in writing to capture all details using GA's "<i>Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation Form</i>" (Attachment C of this Policy) which will be store securely.</b>	Do not make promises, except that you will do your best to keep the child safe.
<b>Allow the adult to talk through the incident in their own words and clarify the basic details.</b>	Do not leave the adult in a distressed state.  Do not ask suggestive or leading questions.
<b>Explain that the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others in order to stop what is happening.</b>	Do not contact the alleged offender.
<b>Ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be.</b>	Do not discuss the details with any person other than those detailed in these procedures
<b>Do report all allegations or concerns to the nominated person as described in this Policy</b>	

## Step 2: Refer the Allegation to relevant body (where appropriate)

- (a) Upon receiving an allegation of abuse or misconduct involving a Child, the allegation should be referred, as appropriate, to the relevant organisation within gymnastics to be dealt with in the first instance. If an allegation relates to behaviour or an incident that occurred at the:
  - (i) Affiliated Club level or involves people operating at the Affiliated Club level, then the allegation should be reported to and handled by the relevant Affiliated Club in the first instance; or
  - (ii) Association Member level or involves people operating at the Association Member level, then the allegation should be reported to and handled by the relevant Association Member in the first instance.
- (b) Only matters that relate to or occur at the national level, including any incidents that occur at a GA organised activity or event, and the most serious cases from Affiliated Club or Association Member level (as reasonably determined by GA at its discretion) should be referred to GA.
- (c) If an allegation is handled at an Affiliated Club or Association Member level, the relevant person(s) handling the allegation within the respective Affiliated Club or Association Member may contact the GA National Child Safety Co-ordinator (or

similar role) who will provide guidance on handling the complaint in accordance with this Policy. For the avoidance of doubt, the guidance provided shall only relate to process under this Policy.

### Step 3: Make an assessment as to whether to report the allegations to external authority

- (a) If the organisation who is handling the allegation (**Handling Organisation**) suspects or believes on reasonable grounds that a Child is, has been, or is at risk of being, the subject of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect or exposure to family violence, they must immediately report the matter to the relevant child protection authority in the respective State or Territory in accordance with Step 4(a).
- (b) If the criteria set out in paragraph (a) above is not satisfied, the Handling Organisation shall either:
  - (i) make a determination (at their discretion) to report the matter to the relevant child protection authority in accordance with Step 4(a) if they have concerns for the safety and / or wellbeing of a Child, even though they do not fall within the criteria set out in the above paragraph; or
  - (ii) proceed to Step 4b.

**NOTE:** the Handling Organisation must contact the relevant child protection authority, state or national child safety officer for advice if there is any doubt about whether the allegation should be reported to authorities.

**NOTE:** a Complainant and/or any person (including but not limited to Applicable Persons) may report directly to relevant authorities, such as police or child protection, any concerns they may have in relation to the safety and welfare of a Child, regardless of whether they have also reported that matter internally.

### Step 4a: Report the allegation to authorities

Subject to Step 3 above, the Handling Organisation may report the allegation to one or more of the following:

- (a) the police and/or the relevant child protection agency immediately (i.e. before the end of the person's shift / session of work). See **Attachment D** for the applicable state/territory contact details; **or**
- (b) senior Personnel or the applicable designated Affiliated Club / Association Member or GA Child Safe Coordinator (or similar role) who will ensure that the incident is reported to the relevant state or territory police and/or the relevant child protection authority, immediately. See **Attachment D** for the applicable Association Member contact details; **or**
- (c) directly to the Authorised Person if senior Personnel or the Child Safe Coordinator (or similar role) is unavailable (or they are the subject of the complaint), who will ensure that the incident is reported to the relevant state or territory police and/or the relevant child protection authority.

### Police involvement

When there is any criminal element or potential future criminal element the Handling Organisation must cooperate with the police and other authorities and assist in their investigation of the allegation. If applicable, the Handling Organisation should seek advice from the police or the relevant Child protection authority before proceeding with any other forms of action. Once police become involved, no-one within the Handling Organisation should attempt to undertake further investigation of the allegation or matter being investigated. It is recommended that the Handling Organisation seeks advice from police as

how to best manage the safety of the Children in our organisation while they are still investigating the matter to avoid jeopardising police proceedings.

**NOTE:** there may be times when an allegation is serious, but the police have advised that they will not be taking any action. It is recommended that the Handling Organisation still seek advice from police as there may be action in the future or criminal conduct may be uncovered during an investigation.

#### Step 4b: Inform management of the allegation

If the Handling Organisation has not already done so, and if appropriate (i.e. if the complaint has not been made against the Handling Organisation's manager), inform the direct manager of the report made to the authorities. This will enable the Handling Organisation to best provide support to the Child, their family and other persons involved, where appropriate.

Where the allegation is in relation to an Applicable Person involved in our organisation (e.g. a coach, volunteer, member of Personnel etc.) senior management within the Handling Organisation must be informed.

#### Step 5: Record the allegation

The *Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation (Attachment C)* must be completed by the Handling Organisation and filed securely (electronically and a hard copy if available) and/or given to the designated club/state/national Child Safe Coordinator or management to store confidentially.

#### Step 6: Conduct a Risk Assessment

When any person is alleged to have been accused of, investigated for, or charged with child abuse or misconduct with a Child, an Authorised Person within the Handling Organisation must assess the level of risk to Children in relation to the alleged offence.

The level of risk will determine what immediate and/or interim safety measures should be implemented by the Handling Organisation. Refer to the Spectrum of Behaviour in Attachment H in this Policy and the Child Abuse Risk Assessment tool in Attachment I in this Policy for guidance on determining the level of risk.

#### Determining whether an allegation is critical or non-critical

Once the level of risk has been determined by the Handling Organisation, the tables below will provide guidance as to whether an allegation is Critical or Non-Critical:

<b>Level of Risk</b>	<b>Critical or Non-Critical</b>
<b>High Risk</b>	<i>Critical</i>
<b>Medium Risk</b>	<i>Non-Critical</i>
<b>Low Risk</b>	<i>Non-Critical</i>

Critical Allegations may include but are not limited to:	Non-Critical Allegations may include but are not limited to:
A breach or allegation that has resulted in, or is likely to result in, significant harm to a Child	A breach or allegation that has NOT resulted in, or is not likely to result in, significant harm to a Child
Any allegation involving sexual abuse or criminal behaviour	Inappropriate behavior(s) that do not involve sexual abuse or criminal behaviour(s)
Abusive or illegal behaviours	Unacceptable behavior(s) that are not abusive or illegal
Any allegation that is being investigated by police or child protection authorities.	Any allegation in which the police or child protection authorities have advised that there is insufficient evidence to pursue further investigation and/or charges.

### Step 7: Determine whether the Respondent is an Applicable Person

The Handling Organisation must determine whether the Respondent is an Applicable Person and bound by this Policy. To determine whether the Respondent is connected to the Organisation, refer to section 3 of this Policy. If they are not an Applicable Person, the Handling Organisation may provide appropriate support to the Child, who is the subject of the allegation, the child's family and Personnel involved, including but not limited to:

- (a) providing an opportunity for the Handling Organisation staff who were involved in receiving, and the initial stages of handling, the allegations to 'debrief' with senior management of the Handling Organisation;
- (b) offering professional services (e.g. counselling) to the child, young person, family members or the Handling Organisation staff involved;
- (c) providing ongoing monitoring of the Child to monitor their wellbeing;
- (d) meeting with the child, young person or family to discuss the concerns (if appropriate); and
- (e) supporting the Child to continue gymnastics (where appropriate); and
- (f) where the contact details of the respondent are available, write to them and advise that they are no longer welcome at GA events (where appropriate and if applicable)

### Step 8: Implement Safety Measures

If the Respondent is an Applicable Person, and there is any risk to Children (ie if an allegation has been determined as being High Risk or Critical), the Authorised Person or relevant management must take any action necessary to safeguard the Child (or other children in its care) from additional harm through options such as:

- (a) redeploying the Respondent to a position where they do not work with children;
- (b) suspension of a Member's membership;
- (c) additional supervision of that Member or person;
- (d) restrictions on gymnastics related event attendance/participation; and
- (e) removing or suspending the Member or person from duty until the validity of the allegation is determined.

In making the assessment, the Handling Organisation must ensure Natural Justice is observed at all times. In particular, it is important to recognise that the fact that a person is being investigated for, or charged with, a criminal offence does not mean that person is guilty of that offence. It is also important to maintain confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including where interim safety measures have been taken).

Interim safety measures must be put in place as soon as practicable by the Handling Organisation and must also be commensurate with the level of risk determined through the initial risk assessment. For example, all allegations of sexual abuse where an Applicable Person involved in our organisation has access to children will be considered high risk and therefore the strictest interim safety measures should be considered.

**It is important to note that the risk to a Child must be assessed on the presumption that the allegation has merit.**

For the avoidance of doubt, such safety measures may be put in place prior to, or during an investigation (internal or external) and/or following the outcome of an investigation.

For any allegation assessed as High Risk or Critical in Step 6, you must consider the most robust safety measures.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Where the livelihood of a Respondent to a Complaint is likely to be adversely impacted by any disciplinary measures imposed, including interim safety measures such as a suspension, special care must be taken by the Handling Organisation before imposing any such measures. The Handling Organisation should seek legal advice prior to imposing interim safety measures in those circumstances.

## Step 9: Communication of Complaint

### Respondent

The Handling Organisation will inform the Respondent in writing and/or face to face, that a Complaint has been received, detail the next steps in the complaints process, state any interim safety measures that will or have been put in place and provide information regarding confidentiality (see clause 14.11 of this Policy).

The Handling Organisation may also communicate and provide an update about any Complaint made to relevant and appropriate people/groups that may include those outlined below.

Prior to contacting the Respondent and/or other people/groups about the Complaint, the Handling Organisation may wish to seek legal advice.

### Australian Reportable Conduct

Please refer to **Appendix G** to determine if you need to make a report to the relevant state or territory organisation for reportable conduct.

### Governing Body

All Child Safety breaches by an Applicable Person must be reported to the relevant Handling Organisation in accordance with this step within 5 working days of receiving the complaint. If, in accordance with Step 1, an allegation has been referred to and dealt with at:

- (a) Affiliated Club level, then the club handling the allegation must report the allegation to the relevant Association Member in their state / territory who will then report the allegation to GA, who, at its discretion, may report the allegation to the Board;
- (b) Association Member level, then the Association Member handling the allegation must report the allegation to GA, who will, at its discretion, report the allegation to the Board; or

(c) national level (i.e. GA), then GA must report the allegation to the Board; and

provide the relevant body (Association Member, GA or GA Board, as appropriate) (**Governing Body**) with a copy of the “Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation”.

When the allegation is reported to GA, it should be done so via the child safe email address at [childsafety@gymnastics.org.au](mailto:childsafety@gymnastics.org.au).

This is to ensure that GA can best provide support to the Child, their family and our Personnel, where appropriate. The Handling Organisation must also include any safety measures that have been put in place in their report to the Governing Body.

It is important that the Handling Organisation shares relevant information with GA and stores documents in a safe and confidential place to centralise and secure the information.

Where an allegation has been dealt with by a Governing Body and an interim measure or sanction imposed at any level under this policy, other Governing Bodies may, in their discretion, impose, uphold or enforce the same or equivalent interim measures or sanctions on the basis of the findings and recommendations of the Governing Body that handled the complaint.

### Step 10: Provide Support

It is important to ensure that the Handling Organisation supports all Personnel, Members, Respondents, Children and Affiliated Clubs throughout this process.

Support may include:

- (a) providing an opportunity for Members or Personnel to ‘debrief’ with senior management of the Handling Organisation;
- (b) offering professional services (e.g. counselling) to the Respondent, Child (or their family or Personnel and Members or volunteers involved);
- (c) providing ongoing monitoring of the Child to monitor their wellbeing;
- (d) meeting with the Child and their family to discuss the concerns (if appropriate);
- (e) meeting with the Respondent to discuss the concerns (if appropriate);
- (f) meeting with the Affiliated Club to discuss the concerns (if appropriate);
- (g) allowing the Respondent or Child to appoint a support person that may be present during meetings with the organisation;
- (h) appointing a designated “contact person” within GA to liaise with the Child (or their family), Affiliated Club and the Respondent during the process. The designated “contact person” can provide information and support without compromising any investigation or procedure. The “contact person” should not be an active part of the investigation or procedure (e.g. they may be the designated MPIO); and
- (i) further child safety training for the club and its Personnel; and/or
- (j) where deemed necessary, covering the cost of up to three professional counselling sessions;

Support for the Respondent must include making it clear to all other Personnel who are aware of the allegation that:

- (a) the allegation does not mean the person is guilty, and that the allegation will be properly investigated and will include the right to ‘Natural Justice; and

- (b) they are not to discuss the matter with any person, except as directed by police, child protection authorities and/or the Handling Organisation and only in direct relation to investigation of the allegation.

### **Step 11: INVESTIGATION/COMPLAINTS HANDLING: Refer to the Member Protection Policy**

After the above steps have been followed, any further action will be taken under (and must follow) Part D of the Member Protection Policy.

For High Risk and/or Critical allegations the Handling Organisation must deal with the Complaint in accordance with the Complaints Procedure in **Part D of the Member Protection Policy**, commencing the process at **Attachment D3 Investigation (Internal and External) Process**.

For Low to Medium Risk and/or Non-Critical allegations the Handling Organisation must deal with the Complaint in accordance with the Complaints Procedure in **Part D of the Member Protection Policy**, commencing the process at **Attachment D1A Informal Approach to Making a Complaint**.

Once the applicable procedures outlined in Part D of the Member Protection Policy have been completed, the matter will proceed in accordance with Step 12 of this Policy.

### **Step 12: Communication of Outcome**

It is important for the Handling Organisation to communicate and provide an update about the outcome of the complaint to relevant and appropriate people/groups in a timely manner that may include those outlined below.

Prior to informing other people/groups about the outcome, the Handling Organisation may wish to seek legal advice about the proposed communication of the information.

#### **Governing Body**

Where GA has conducted an investigation, GA must update the relevant Member Association and/or Affiliated Club with the outcome of the complaint. GA will confirm whether or not the allegation was substantiated (if an investigation occurred) and any disciplinary measures or conditions that were imposed.

If a Member Association conducted an investigation, they must contact GA and provide them with the information as stated above within 5 working days of determination of the outcome of the complaint.

If an Affiliated Club conducted an investigation, they must contact the relevant Association Member and provide them with the above information about the outcome of the complaint. The Association Member must then contact GA and provide the same within 5 working days of determination of the outcome of the complaint.

#### **Police or Child Protection**

If there was a finding or substantiation that may affect the status of a person's working with children check, the Handling Organisation must inform the relevant state or territory authority.

If any information or evidence was discovered during the process that involves criminal behaviour, the Handling Organisation must notify police immediately.

#### **Respondent and Complainant**

The outcome of the investigation should be communicated by the Handling Organisation to both the Respondent and the Complainant in accordance with Step 3 of Attachment D1B of the Member Protection Policy for matters that proceed to a formal complaint process under Attachment D1B.

For Low to Medium Risk and/or Non-Critical allegations that conclude at the informal approach to making a complaint in accordance with Attachment D1A of the Member Protection Policy, the MPIO of the Handling Organisation may, at their discretion, determine whether communication with the Respondent and / or the Complainant is necessary and take the appropriate steps accordingly.

**For a flow chart summary of this procedure  
please refer to Attachment B of this Policy**



## **ATTACHMENT B: FLOW CHART SUMMARY OF ATTACHMENT A, PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS**

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[Flow Chart Summary of Procedure for Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations](#)

## ATTACHMENT C: CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATION FORM

Before completing this form, please ensure that all requirements as outlined in this Policy have been followed and advice has been sought from the police and/or the relevant child protection agency where appropriate.

SECTION A		
Complainant's Name (if other than the child)		Date Allegation Received:     /     /
Complainant's Contact number		
Complainant's email address		
Complainant's role in the Handling Organisation		
State/Territory the Complainant resides in:		
Handling Organisation		
Child's name		Age:
Child's address		
Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Torres Strait Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown	
Can the child be classified as a Vulnerable Person'?	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, child with a disability <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, other, please specify.....	
Please categorise the incident (for definitions refer to <b>Section 11</b> of this Policy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Harm <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional or psychological abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Neglect <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Family violence <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual offence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other inappropriate behaviour and/or breach of Child Safe Policy/Child Safe Code of Conduct Please detail..... ..... .....

	<input type="checkbox"/> Grooming <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual exploitation	
Name of person complained about (Respondent)		
Respondent's role in the Handling Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete/player <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Official	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please detail) .....
Date of incident		
Time of incident		
Location of incident		
Witnesses (if more than 3 witnesses, attach additional details to this form)	Name (1): Contact details:	
	Name (2): Contact details:	
	Name (3): Contact details:	
Details of complaint / reason for suspecting abuse	<p><i>Use as much detail here as necessary and be sure to include what was said, (where possible, noting the exact words used by the person making the allegation); what you observed (e.g. observation, injury, disclosure) and any other details relevant to the incident.</i></p>	
Interim immediate action (if any) taken to ensure child's safety and/or to support needs of person complained about		
Police contacted?	Who: When: Advice provided:	

Government / Child Protection agency contacted?	Who: When: Advice provided: Case reference number (if known):
Management/Child Safety Coordinator contacted?	Who: When:
GA contacted (if applicable)?	Who: When:
Completed by	Name: Position: Signature: Date: / /
Signed by	Complainant (if not a child) name
<b>SECTION B</b>	
OUTCOME: Police and/or government agency investigation (if any)	Date: Finding:
OUTCOME: Internal investigation (if any)	Date: Finding:
Action / Discipline taken (if any)	
Completed by	Name: Position: Signature: Date: / /
Signed by	Complainant (if not a child) name

This record and any notes must be kept in a confidential place and provided to the relevant authorities (police and government) should they require them.

## ATTACHMENT D: CONTACT DETAILS FOR ADVICE OR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Child and Youth Protection Services</u></a>	<p><a href="#"><u>Child and Youth Protection Services</u></a> is responsible for facilitating coordination across government for the care and protection of Children.</p> <p>If you are concerned about a child and want further information on mandatory reporting, refer to <a href="#"><u>Keeping Children and Young People Safe</u></a>.</p>	<p><b>General public</b> Ph: 1300 556 729 (24 hours)</p> <p><b>Mandated reporters</b> Ph: 1300 556 728 (24 hours)</p> <p><a href="#"><u>Email: Child Protection Reports</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Complete online child concern report</u></a></p>
<b>NEW SOUTH WALES</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Department of Family and Community Services</u></a>	<p>By law, Community Services must assess reports where a child or young person is or may be at risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect. Information about the process of reporting child welfare concerns in NSW can be found on the department's <a href="#"><u>Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect</u></a> webpage.</p> <p>For information about mandatory reporting, refer to the <a href="#"><u>Resources for mandatory reporters</u></a> webpage.</p>	<p><b>Child Protection Helpline</b> Ph: 13 21 11 (24 hours) (TTY 1800 212 936)</p> <p>Non-imminent reports can also be made using <a href="#"><u>eReporting</u></a></p>
<b>NORTHERN TERRITORY</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Territory Families</u></a>	<p>In the Northern Territory every person is required to report suspected child abuse and neglect.</p> <p>For further information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare in the NT refer to the <a href="#"><u>Report Child Abuse</u></a> page of the department's website.</p>	<p><b>Child Protection Hotline</b> Ph: 1800 700 250 (24 hours)</p>
<b>QUEENSLAND</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services</u></a>	<p>Child Safety Services is the lead child protection agency in Queensland. For information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare in Queensland refer to the <a href="#"><u>Reporting Child Abuse</u></a> page of the department's website.</p>	<p>For a list of contact numbers during business hours, go to: <a href="#"><u>Regional Intake Services</u></a></p>

	<p>For more information about mandatory reporting, refer to the <a href="#">Mandatory Reporting in Queensland</a> webpage.</p>	<p>To locate your nearest Child Safety Service Centre, Ph:</p> <p>1800 811 810</p> <p><b>Child Safety After Hours Service Centre</b> Ph: 1800 177 135 (24 hours)</p>
<b>SOUTH AUSTRALIA</b>		
<p><a href="#">Department of Child Protection</a></p>	<p>The Department of Child Protection works to keep South Australia's children safe by protecting them from abuse and neglect.</p> <p>For information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare in SA, refer to the department's <a href="#">Report Child Abuse</a> webpage.</p> <p>The Department of Child Protection provides additional information for mandatory reporting, including <a href="#">Mandated Notifiers and their Role</a> and <a href="#">Preparing to Report Child Abuse</a>.</p>	<p><b>Child Abuse Report Line</b> Ph: 13 14 78</p> <p><b>After hours crisis care</b> Ph: 13 16 11</p> <p><a href="#">Report child abuse online</a></p>
<b>TASMANIA</b>		
<p><a href="#">Children and Youth Services</a></p>	<p>The role of Children and Youth Services is to protect Children who are at risk of abuse and neglect.</p> <p>For information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare in Tasmania refer to the department's <a href="#">Child Safety Services</a> webpage.</p> <p>Information about mandatory reporting can be found in the department's information sheet: <a href="#">Responsibilities of Mandatory Reporters</a>.</p>	<p><b>Child Safety Services:</b> 1300 737 639 (24 hours)</p> <p><a href="#">Report child abuse online</a></p>
<b>VICTORIA</b>		
<p><a href="#">Department of Health and Human Services</a></p>	<p>The Child Protection Service is targeted to those Children at risk of significant harm.</p> <p>For information about child protection and mandatory reporting requirements in Victoria, refer to the department's <a href="#">Child Protection</a> webpage.</p>	<p>For a list of regional and metropolitan phone numbers: <a href="#">Child Protection Contacts</a></p> <p><b>After hours child protection emergency service</b> Ph: 13 12 78</p>
<b>WESTERN AUSTRALIA</b>		

**Department of  
Communities**

The Department of Communities, Child Protection and Family Support offers a range of services to support children and families.

For further information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare refer to the department's '[If You are Concerned about a Child](#)' webpage.

Information about mandatory reporting in WA can be found on the department's [Mandatory Reporting Information](#) webpage.

Ph: (08) 9223 1111 or  
Country Freecall:

1800 199 008

**If you are a  
mandatory reporter**  
Ph: 1800 708 704

Lodge a written mandatory report online using the department's secure [Mandatory Reporting Web System](#) or download and complete a [Mandatory Reporting Form](#)

## ATTACHMENT E: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHILD PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS

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Working with children checks aim to create a child-safe environment and to protect Children involved in gymnastics in Australia from physical and sexual harm.

They assess the suitability of people to work with Children and can involve:

- criminal history checks;
- signed declarations;
- referee checks; and
- other relevant background checks to assess a person's suitability to work with Children.

Working with children check requirements vary across Australia. [Information](#) for each state and territory are available on the Play by the Rules website: [www.playbytherules.net.au](http://www.playbytherules.net.au)

Detailed information, including the forms required to complete a Working with Children Check, are available from the relevant agencies in each state and territory.

### Australian Capital Territory

Contact Access Canberra

Website: [Access Canberra](#)

Phone: 13 22 81

### New South Wales

Contact the Office of the Children's Guardian

Website: [Kids Guardian](#)

Phone: 02 9286 7219

### Northern Territory

Contact the NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Website: [Safe NT](#)

Phone: 1800 SAFE NT (1800 723 368)

### Queensland

Contact the Queensland Government Blue Card Services.

Website: [Blue Card Services](#)

Phone: 1800 113 611

### South Australia

Contact the Department of Human Services about Working With Children Checks

Website: [Human Services](#)

Phone : 1300 321 592

National Police Check: [SA Police](#)

### Tasmania

Contact the Consumer, Building and Occupational Services unit of the Department of Justice about the working with vulnerable people registrations

Website: [TAS Department of Justice](#)

Phone: 1300 654 499

### Victoria

Contact the Department of Justice

Website: [VIC Department of Justice](#)

Phone: 1300 652 879

### Western Australia

Contact the Department of Communities

Website: [Department of Communities](#)

Phone: (08) 6217 8100



## **Travelling to other states or territories**

It is important to remember that when travelling to other states or territories, representatives of sporting organisations must comply with the legislative requirements of that particular state or territory.

In certain jurisdictions, temporary, time limited exemptions from working with children checks may be available for interstate visitors with a Working with children check in their home state.

The laws providing interstate exemptions are not consistent across Australia.

If an employee or volunteer for your organisation is travelling interstate to do work that would normally require a working for children check, you will need to check the relevant requirements of that state or territory.

## ATTACHMENT F: MANDATORY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Jurisdiction	Types to be reported	Mandated notifies
<b>ACT</b>	Physical & sexual abuse	A person who is: a doctor; a dentist; a nurse; an enrolled nurse; a midwife; a psychologist; a teacher at a school; a person authorised to inspect education programs used for home education of a Child under the Education Act 2004; a police officer; a person employed to counsel Children at a school; a person caring for a child at a child care centre; a person coordinating a family day care scheme; a public servant who works with, or provides services personally to, Children or families; the public advocate; an official visitor; a person who, in the course of the person's employment, has contact with or provides services to children, young people and their families and is prescribed by regulation
<b>NSW</b>	Physical abuse Sexual abuse Emotional/psychological abuse Neglect Exposure to domestic violence	A person who, in the course of his or her professional work or other paid employment delivers health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children; and a person who holds a management position in an organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children
<b>NT</b>	Physical abuse Sexual abuse or other exploitation of the child Emotional/psychological abuse Neglect Exposure to physical violence (e.g., a child witnessing violence between parents at home)	Any person
	Sexual Abuse: Sexual offences against children aged 14 or 15 years where offender > 2 years older.	A health practitioner or someone who performs work of a kind that is prescribed by regulation
<b>QLD</b>	Physical & sexual abuse	An authorised officer, a public service employee employed in the department, a person employed in a departmental care service or licensed care service Relevant persons: doctors; registered nurses; teachers; a police officer who, under a direction given by the commissioner of the police service under the <i>Police Service Administration Act 1990</i> , is responsible for reporting under this section; a person engaged to perform a

		child advocate function under the <i>Public Guardian Act 2014</i> , early childhood education and care (ECEC) professionals.
	Sexual abuse	School staff
<b>SA</b>	Physical abuse Sexual abuse Emotional/ psychological abuse Neglect	Medical practitioners; pharmacists; registered or enrolled nurses; dentists; psychologists; police officers; community corrections officers; social workers; a minister of religion, a person who is an employee of, or volunteer in, an organisation formed for religious or spiritual purposes, (with the exception of disclosures made in the confessional); teachers in educational institutions including kindergartens; approved family day care providers; any other person who is an employee/volunteer in a government or non-government organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children, being a person who is actively engaged in the delivery of those services to children or who holds a management position in the relevant organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children
<b>TAS</b>	Physical abuse Sexual abuse Emotional/ psychological abuse Neglect Exposure to family violence	Registered medical practitioners; registered or enrolled nurses; persons registered under the <i>Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Tasmania)</i> in the midwifery, dental or psychological profession; police officers; probation officers; principals and teachers in any educational institution including kindergartens; persons who provide child care or a child care service for fee or reward; persons concerned in the management of a child care service within the meaning of the <i>Education and Care Services National Law (Tasmania)</i> or a child care service licensed under the Child Care Act 2001; any other person who is employed or engaged as an employee for, of, or in, or who is a volunteer in, a government agency that provides health, welfare, education, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children, and an organisation that receives any funding from the Crown for the provision of such services; and any other person of a class determined by the Minister by notice in the Gazette to be prescribed persons.
<b>VIC</b>	Physical injury or sexual abuse	Registered medical practitioners, nurses, midwives, a person registered as a teacher or an early childhood teacher under the <i>Education and Training and Reform Act 2006 (ETR Act)</i> or teachers granted permission to teach under that Act; principals of government or nongovernment schools within the meaning of the ETR Act; and police officers
	Sexual offence against a child by an adult	Any adult
<b>WA</b>	Sexual abuse	Doctors; nurses and midwives; teachers or boarding supervisor; and police officers
	Physical abuse Sexual abuse Neglect  Psychological harm including (but not limited to) harm caused by	Court personnel including the principal registrar, a registrar or deputy registrar; family counsellors; family consultants; family dispute resolution practitioners, arbitrators or legal practitioners independently representing the child's interests

	being subjected or exposed to family violence.	
<b>Australia</b>	All types	Family Court of Australia, the Federal Circuit Court of Australia and the Family Court of Western Australia personnel; which includes family counsellors; family consultants; family dispute resolution practitioners, arbitrators or legal practitioners independently representing the child's interests

**Please note:** this information is current at the time this Policy was released. Please check to make sure the details for your state/territory are still current.

Source: Australian Institute of Family Studies <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>

## ATTACHMENT G: AUSTRALIAN REPORTABLE CONDUCT LEGISLATION

Jurisdiction	Definition	Report to	Organisations required to report
<b>ACT (July 2017)</b>	Ill treatment; neglect or psychological harm to a child; misconduct of a sexual nature; or criminal offences involving a child	Ombudsman	Not yet determined
<b>NSW (March 2020)</b>	Any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child - including a child pornography offence Any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child even if the child consented to the behaviour	Office of Children's Guardian	Designated government agencies include: Department of Family and Community Services; Department of Education; Ministry of Health; Local Health Districts; Ambulance NSW; Statutory Health Corporations; Juvenile Justice NSW; Corrective Services NSW; TAFE Designated non-government agencies include: Non-government schools; Accredited statutory out-of-home care service providers; Designated voluntary out-of-home care service providers; Agencies providing substitute residential care to children; Approved Education and Care Services; Affiliated Health Organisations. 'Other public authorities' are only required to notify reportable allegations or convictions that arise in the course of the employee's work.
<b>VIC (July 2017)</b>	Any offence or misconduct involving children, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a sexual offence; or</li> <li>• sexual misconduct; or</li> <li>• physical violence; or</li> <li>• significant emotional or psychological harm; or</li> <li>• significant neglect.</li> </ul>	Commission for Children and Young People	Department of Health and Human Services and a range of organisations funded and/or regulated by the department that exercise care, supervision or authority over children, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection services</li> <li>• residential disability services for children</li> <li>• out-of-home care services</li> <li>• mental health service providers that provide in-patient beds for children</li> <li>• drug or alcohol treatment services that provide inpatient beds for Children</li> <li>• housing or homelessness services that provide overnight beds for Children, such as youth refuges</li> <li>• youth justice and corrective services</li> <li>• Government and non-government schools, other disability service providers that provide services for children, including those registered with the National Disability Insurance Scheme, providers of overnight camps, religious bodies, and the residential facilities of boarding schools.</li> </ul> <p>From 1 January 2019, the scheme will apply to early childhood services (such as kindergartens, after hours care services and occasional care providers) and prescribed statutory bodies that have responsibility for children (such as certain public museums and galleries).</p>

**Please note:** the information provided above is a summary for general reference only. If you are unsure of your reporting obligations you should seek direction from the ombudsman/ commissioner in your jurisdiction.

**Sources:**

NSW Ombudsman <https://www.ombo.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/our-work/employment-related-child-protection/reportable-allegations-and-convictions>

Victoria Commissioner for Children and Young People  
<http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportableconduct/index.htm>

ACT Ombudsman <http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/policystrategic/reportable-conduct-scheme>

## ATTACHMENT H: SPECTRUM OF BEHAVIOURS BY BRAVEHEARTS\*

<b>Spectrum of Behaviour – by Bravehearts</b>	
<b>Child Safe Behaviours</b>	<p>These behaviours respect the rights of Children, place a priority on their welfare and promote child safe practices. Child Safe Behaviours also uphold the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the values of GA. These behaviours contribute to a culture of safety towards all people, especially Children.</p> <p>e.g. appropriately following the GA Child Safe Policy, guidelines and Codes of Behaviour</p>
<b>Inappropriate Behaviours</b>	<p>These behaviours may “blur boundaries” with Children and disregard a young person’s rights to personal safety or they may be the result of poor judgement in a specific scenario. Inappropriate behaviours fall short of specifically defined Unacceptable Behaviour. If they are allowed to continue and are repetitive, they may escalate into unacceptable behaviour or abuse and potentially criminal behaviour.</p> <p>e.g. yelling at and berating a child for under performing</p>
<b>Unacceptable Behaviours</b>	<p>These behaviours are in breach of GA’s values and policies. They may be considered “grey area” and fall short of criminal behaviour or the legal definitions of abuse. These behaviours are unacceptable, and if allowed to continue may continue to escalate into abuse or criminal behaviour.</p> <p>e.g. forming a close bond with a particular athlete and showing favouritism.</p>
<b>Abusive/Illegal Behaviours</b>	<p>Abusive and illegal behaviours include the four types of child abuse, namely child sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. These behaviours can have significant and long term adverse impacts for Children. Abusive and illegal behaviours not only breach GA values and policies, they could result in criminal prosecution.</p> <p>e.g. breaching GA Child Safe Policy, Guidelines, Codes of Conduct and Child Protection Laws.</p>

\*[Bravehearts](https://bravehearts.org.au/who-we-are/about-bravehearts/) is an Australian child protection organisation. GA partnered with Bravehearts in 2018 (<https://bravehearts.org.au/who-we-are/about-bravehearts/>)

## ATTACHMENT I: CHILD ABUSE RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

When assessing the risk a Respondent poses to Children in Handling Organisations you should consider the factors in the table below.

Please note that this list is not complete and other factors may need to be taken into consideration.

Each allegation should be assessed on a case by case basis.

<b>Risk Assessment: Allegations of child abuse</b>		
The nature of the alleged or proven offence:	<i>Refer to Section 11 of this Policy for details on the forms of abuse</i>	
The circumstances in which the alleged or proven offence occurred:		
The place or places where the alleged or proven offence occurred:		
The age and gender of the alleged offender:		
Were there additional vulnerabilities of the person that is the subject of a complaint?		
The age and gender of the alleged or proven person that is the subject of a complaint(s):		
Did the alleged offender have regular and frequent contact with other children or groups of children? What was the nature and circumstances of that contact?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Nature of contact: <i>e.g. coaches gymnastics with 12 year olds every week</i>	
The opportunities that were available to the alleged offender to offend against other children:	<i>e.g. during gymnastics classes (entering the bathrooms, potential to arrange for unsupervised contact outside of gymnastics) etc.</i>	
What safety measures were already in place when the alleged offence occurred?	<i>e.g. the coach would spend time unsupervised with the person that is the subject of the complaint during training even though other people were around and there was a code of conduct banning this.</i>	
Are there any high risk scenario's the alleged offender has access to?	<i>e.g. the alleged offender is a chaperone for an upcoming interstate club event. Any time an adult spends time overnight with a child there is a higher risk to the child. e.g. the alleged offender drives the bus for the state team</i>	
Does the offender have access to direct, unsupervised contact with children?	<i>e.g. chaperones, coaches, board member etc.</i>	



Once the Handling Organisation has considered the above factors use the risk matrix tool below to determine the level of risk (Low, Medium, High) the Respondent presents.

This will then inform any decisions made by the Handling Organisation regarding what safety interim measures should be put in place. For example, if the risk is assessed as being high consideration for removing the Respondent from all contact with children in the gymnastics community should be seriously considered; and, if the complaint has not already been reported, reconsider whether it should be reported to a relevant authority in accordance with Step 2.

If the risk is assessed as being low, it may be more appropriate to monitor the Respondent when they are interacting with Children in gymnastics instead.

### Risk Assessment Matrix

	Severity of Impact/Consequences			
		Low Severity	Moderate Severity	Major Severity
Frequency of contact with children	Frequent	Medium	High	High
	Likely	Low	Medium	High
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium

## ATTACHMENT J: NATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

If you or someone you know is at imminent risk, call Emergency Services on 000.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, and you are unsure which service to contact, call Kids Help Line on 1800 55 1800 or Lifeline on 13 11 14. Both are available from anywhere in Australia 24 hours a day (toll free) and provide generalist crisis counselling, information and referral services.

<p><b><u>1800 Respect</u></b> Call 1800 737 732</p>	<p>24/7 telephone and online crisis support, information and immediate referral to specialist counselling for anyone in Australia who has experienced or been impacted by sexual assault, or domestic or family violence.</p>
<p><b><u>1800 THE LINE</u></b> Call 1800 695 463</p>	<p>A national relationships helpline for Children to talk to someone about the relationship issues they may be experiencing, or if they are unclear about where to draw the line between what is, or is not, a respectful relationship.</p>
<p><b><u>Lifeline</u></b> Call 13 11 14</p>	<p>A generalist and crisis telephone counselling, information and referral service, provided by trained volunteers who are supported by professional staff.</p>
<p><b><u>Blue Knot Foundation</u></b> 1300 657 380</p>	<p>Staffed by trained trauma-informed counsellors, this support line offers information, support and referral to adult survivors of childhood trauma and abuse, and partners, family and friends of survivors.</p>
<p><b><u>Bravehearts</u></b> Call 1800 272 831</p>	<p>Open to anyone wanting information, advice, referrals and support regarding child sexual assault.</p>
<p><b><u>Child Wise</u></b> <b><u>National Child Abuse Prevention Helpline</u></b> Call 1800 99 10 99</p>	<p>Confidential support services for individuals who have experienced abuse in an institutional setting and/or need support and counselling after giving evidence to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, or for professionals supporting these individuals. This helpline can provide information, short-term counselling, and referrals.</p>
<p><b><u>Children and Young People with Disability Australia</u></b> Call 1800 222 660</p>	<p>National peak body for Children with disability. Provides information and systemic representation</p>
<p><b><u>Counselling Online</u></b></p>	<p>A free online and SMS/text-based service providing assistance to Australian residents concerned about alcohol and other drugs</p>
<p><b><u>Headspace</u></b> Call 1800 650 890</p>	<p>A free and confidential telephone and online service for people aged 12-25. Qualified youth mental health professionals provide support to young people worried about their mental health or experiencing issues such as depression, bullying and isolation. Support is also available to concerned parents or carers.</p>
<p><b><u>Healing Foundation</u></b></p>	<p>Service to help build the capacity of Indigenous organisations and support the development of the Link Up network</p>

<p><b><u><a href="#">Kids Helpline</a></u></b> Call 1800 55 1800</p>	<p>Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.</p>
<p><b><u><a href="#">People with Disability Australia</a></u></b> – Call 1800 422 015/TTY: 1800 422 016</p>	<p>National telephone line to provide information and referrals to people with disabilities</p>
<p><b><u><a href="#">QLife</a></u></b> Call 1800 184 527</p>	<p>Provides early intervention, peer supported telephone counselling and referral services for people who identify as gender diverse, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or Intersex (LGBTI).</p>
<p><b><u><a href="#">Sexual Assault Counselling Australia</a></u></b> Call 1800 211 028</p>	<p>National telephone counselling service for people who have experienced abuse. Face-to-face counselling is available in New South Wales.</p>

## ATTACHMENT K: CODES OF BEHAVIOUR WHEN DEALING WITH CHILDREN

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The below Codes of Behaviour must be followed at all times. Any breach will be dealt with under this Policy. Please note, general Codes of Behaviour and coaches and judges codes of ethics are also outlined in the Member Protection Policy.

### 1. General behaviours

- (a) Adhere to professional role boundaries.
- (b) Staff members who are Applicable Persons must not, of their own volition or at the request of a service user, act outside the confines of their duties (as specified in their position description).
- (c) Do not provide unauthorised (ie without express permission from a parent or guardian of the relevant child(ren)) transportation.
- (d) Do not engage in unauthorised activities with children who are clients or individual Members and who are not family members outside authorised gymnastic services, programs or events.
- (e) Do not provide any form of unauthorised support to a child who are not family members or their family, unrelated to gymnastic services, programs or events, for example, babysitting.
- (f) Do not seek unauthorised contact with Children who are not a family members outside gymnastic services, programs or events.
- (g) Do not accept any invitations to attend private social functions at the request of a Child who has participated or is participating in gymnastic services, programs or events – or at the request of their family – except where there is a preexisting relationship. Please note you must disclose all pre-existing relationships to GA, your relevant club or state / territory member association.
- (h) Do not develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children).
- (i) If you become aware of a situation in which a Child requires assistance that is beyond the confines of that person's role, or beyond the scope of GA's usual service, they should at the earliest opportunity:
  - (i) refer the matter to an appropriate support agency; or
  - (ii) refer the Child to an appropriate support agency or contact the Child's parent or guardian or seek advice from management.

### 2. Do not engage in any sexual misconduct

Under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between, with, or in the presence of, children participating in gymnastics. Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in our sport is prohibited even if the young persons involved may be above the legal age of consent.

- (a) 'Sexual behaviour' will be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- (i) 'contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution; and
- (ii) 'non-contact behaviour', such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

### **3. Positive Guidance (Discipline)**

- (a) Strive to ensure that Children participating in gymnastics are aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience for all participants.
- (b) Children are encouraged to feel safe and to be safe and to have positive relationships and friendships with their peers.
- (c) Wherever possible, Children are encouraged to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities, especially on issues that are important to them.
- (d) Children are given information about their safe participation in organisational activities including access to information about child abuse prevention programs.
- (e) There are times when Personnel may be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure:
  - (i) an effective and positive environment; and
  - (ii) the safety and/or wellbeing of Children or Personnel participating in gymnastics.

### **4. Positive coaching techniques**

All Personnel must use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of the children involved. The Child needs to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner.

Under no circumstances are our Personnel to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

### **5. Promoting equality and diversity**

All Personnel must ensure that their approach and interactions with Children are sensitive, respectful and inclusive of all backgrounds and abilities. Where our organisation has involvement with Children who are Indigenous or Torres Strait Islanders, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds or those with a disability, our Personnel will promote their safety (including cultural safety), participation and empowerment. For further information please refer to the GA Inclusion Policy.

### **6. Use of language and tone of voice**

Language and tone of voice used in the presence of Children should provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage or affirm them not be harmful to children – in this respect, avoid language that is:

- (a) discriminatory, racist or sexist;
- (b) derogatory, belittling or negative, e.g by calling a child a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat';

- (c) intended to threaten or frighten;
- (d) profane or sexual; and
- (e) inappropriate

## **7. Giving Gifts**

GA prohibits our Personnel from giving gifts/presents to Children to whom we provide a service other than the provision of awards.

## **8. Supervision**

GA Personnel are responsible for supervising the Children who participate in gymnastic services, programs or events to ensure those participants:

- (a) engage positively with gymnastics services, programs or events;
- (b) behave appropriately toward one another; and
- (c) are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats.

Our personnel are required to avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with Children to whom we provide services, and (where possible) to conduct all activities and/or discussions with service recipients in view of other Personnel.

## **9. Mixed age groups**

GA does not prohibit adults from training alongside children. Clubs have a responsibility to ensure they consider the differences in needs based not only on age but also experience and stage of development for each of their participants. Where clubs have adults training with children, the club has a responsibility to create a safe environment for all its participants and where necessary, this includes putting safeguards in place to protect children and adults in our sport. For example, requiring adults who work with Children to hold a current working with Children check or such other similar check in the relevant jurisdiction.

## **10. Use of electronic communications and social media**

GA acknowledges the enormous value of technology and social media to communicate, promote our sport and celebrate the achievements and success of the people involved in gymnastics however we also recognise the risks that social media can pose.

Where interactions are open and transparent on social media that is generally accepted, however private messaging between two individuals is tantamount to a behind closed doors discussion and is not acceptable.

The main principles to abide by when communicating with a Child electronically are:

- (a) interactions on social media should always be open and transparent and communicating privately with a Child is inappropriate;
- (b) accordingly, Personnel should at all times adhere to the following guidelines as well as the GA Website and Social Media Policy when using electronic communication;
- (c) when communicating with Children always ensure a parent and/or other Personnel is copied into the correspondence (e.g. a group chat);

- (d) communicate through official channels if social media is the only possible way to communicate (e.g. if mobile phone text messaging apps do not work overseas you can use Facebook messenger, however, use the Club's official FB page not your own personal account);
- (e) restrict communication to issues directly associated with delivering our gymnastics services, programs or events, such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled;
- (f) limit the personal or social content in such communications to what is required to convey the service-related message in a polite, friendly manner;
- (g) follow the photographs of Children guidelines when posting any images on social media;
- (h) you must not post photographs of Children on personal social media accounts;
- (i) 'share' photos or posts from official gymnastics social media platforms instead of posting directly from a personal account;
- (j) do not communicate with Children via electronic communication one on one. (e.g. direct message, internet chat rooms, social networking sites and E-mail communication); coaches should not 'friend' athletes;
- (k) do not upload/post still/moving images or audio recordings of Children without the prior authorisation of their parent or guardian;
- (l) do not request Children to keep the communication a secret from their parents or others;
- (m) do not use such communication to promote unauthorised 'social' activity or to arrange unauthorised contact;
- (n) do not use inappropriate language when communicating with a Child;
- (o) do not communicate anything that a reasonable observer could view as being of a sexual nature (refer to section 2(a) of Attachment K); and
- (p) personnel are required to ensure appropriate monitoring of children when they use GA electronic communication equipment to ensure they do not inadvertently place themselves at risk of abuse or exploitation via social networking sites, gaming sites or through web searches, or inappropriate email communication.

## 11. Employment of Children

Many Association Members employ Children. There may be occasions where a young person working for an Association Member has a pre-existing relationship with a Child they oversee/coach/judge. For example, a coach and gymnast may go to the same school and be friends outside of gymnastics. GA recommends that in these circumstances the Association Member ensures the Children they employ:

- (a) are aware that they are in a position of authority and therefore have power over Children;
- (b) declare all pre-existing relationships especially where they communicate personally with another Child Participant; and
- (c) are aware that the Child Safe Policy and Codes of Behaviours apply to them due to them being in a position of authority.

## 12. Photographs of Children

Children to whom we deliver programs or services should only be photographed while involved in gymnastics if:

- (a) the context of the photo is directly related to participation in gymnastics; and
- (b) the Child is appropriately dressed and posed.

Images are not to be distributed (including as an attachment to an email) to anyone outside GA other than the child photographed or their parent, without management knowledge and approval.

Images (digital or hard copy) are to be stored in a manner that prevents unauthorised access by others, for example:

- (a) if in hard-copy form, in a locked drawer or cabinet; or
- (b) if in electronic form, in a 'password protected' folder.

Images (digital or hard copy) are to be destroyed or deleted as soon as they are no longer required.

Images are not to be exhibited on our website without parental knowledge and express approval, or such images must be presented in a manner that de-identifies the Child. Any caption or accompanying text may need to be checked so that it does not identify a Child if such identification is potentially detrimental.

To the extent practicable, images are not to be taken on personal devices.

Images of Children involved in gymnastics should not be stored on your personal device.

## 13. Physical contact with Children

Gymnastics is a sport that requires close physical contact at times to ensure the safety of an athlete. As such it is 'high risk' area and strong, rigorous guidelines around contact must be followed. Any physical contact with Children must be appropriate to the delivery of gymnastics coaching such as spotting, fitting sporting equipment like grips, and appropriately correcting technique and must also be based on the needs of the Child (such as to assist or comfort a distressed child) rather than on the needs of the other person.

Some guidelines regarding physical contact are detailed below but this list is not exhaustive, and a common-sense approach should be taken, with safeguarding and the wants and needs of the Child front of mind at all times.

- (a) seek a Child's permission to touch or interact when demonstrating an activity.
- (b) always communicate with a Child when physical touch may be necessary.
- (c) respect and respond to signs that a Child is uncomfortable with touch.
- (d) try to use verbal directions rather than touch (e.g., ask a Child to move in a particular way, rather than physically place them in the required position).
- (e) try to avoid and discourage younger children from inappropriate expectations of hugs or cuddles. This should be done gently and without embarrassment or offence to the child. For example, offer a high five as encouragement.



- (f) kindly and appropriately tell a Child who is inappropriately or excessively touching another Child to stop and raise the concern with staff members who are Applicable Persons.
- (g) use non-intrusive touch (e.g., congratulating a Child by shaking hands or a pat on the upper arm or back). Try to accompany such touch with positive encouraging words.
- (h) do not, under any circumstances, have contact with a Child that involves any intimate part of a Child's body e.g., genitals, backside or breast area.
- (i) do not initiate, permit or request inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a Child (e.g., massage, kisses, hugs, tickling and wrestling games, adjusting a Child's leotard, sitting on a Child to assist with sit ups/stretching).
- (j) do not facilitate situations that unnecessarily result in close physical contact with a Child.
- (k) do not inflict corporal punishment (physical discipline, smacking, long runs in hot weather, no water breaks, excessive exercise etc.).
- (l) do not engage in touch that would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation.
- (m) Use only your hands to spot, correct technique or manipulate gymnasts into position (e.g. do not use your foot to adjust a child's position).

#### 14. Spotting and manual support

Supporting and 'shaping' the gymnast is an essential part of coaching gymnastics in that it helps the gymnast to understand shapes, movement patterns and complex skills, and it also reduces the risk of injury due to a fall or error in performance.

The key points on safe spotting and manual support are:

- (a) always put the immediate safety of the Child above any other concerns (e.g. if a Child is going to fall and catching them might result in contact with a sensitive body part you must still catch them);
- (b) ensure that support is only used when necessary and "over-handling" is avoided;
- (c) be alert to the possibility of performance errors or anxiety, which may increase the risk of injury;
- (d) do not use supporting techniques that inhibit performance; and
- (e) infrequent non-intentional physical contact can arise out of error on the performer or coach's part. Such situations should not be ignored and should be acknowledged through an apology to the gymnast and reported to a senior Personnel. A written report should be made of any significant incident\* which is to be reported to the relevant club or member association. It is also good practice to explain and provide some written guidance, perhaps as part of an induction pack, to new Members and parents that some physical contact will be required but that only appropriate, non-invasive techniques should be used. If a gymnast or parent has any concerns, they should be raised with a senior Personnel at the relevant Affiliated Club or Member Association. In any circumstance where abuse is suspected, GA reporting procedures should be followed.

\*In this section a significant incident is defined as being:

- (i) the contact resulted in the Child experiencing or likely to experience significant harm;
- (ii) the contact involved an intimate part of a Child's body (e.g., genitals, backside or breast area) and the Child was significantly distressed as a result;
- (iii) the contact involved an intimate part of a Child's body (e.g., genitals, backside or breast area) and was or appeared to be intentional; or
- (iv) the contact involved could be observed to be a criminal offence e.g. involving penetration.

## 15. Massaging

During any gymnastics related activity or at any gymnastics event, or during any time employed or engaged by GA, staff members who are Applicable Persons must not engage in any form of massage with Children unless they are engaged in a professional capacity for the purpose of supporting that Child's physical conditioning, recovery, rehabilitation or injury prevention. Any doctor, who is an Applicable Person, should only provide medical services within the scope of their professional capacity - not the nature of services performed by a qualified masseur/se or physiotherapist.

Prior to engaging in any form of massage such persons must provide GA with a current copy of their accreditation or qualification. This information will be stored securely on GA's CRM system (iMIS). It is the responsibility of each person proposing to undertake massage in these circumstances to provide GA with these details.

If there is no qualified masseur(se) available the following guidelines may be considered by gymnasts:

- (i) soft tissue maintenance treatment can be undertaken by gymnasts themselves using a foam roller, tennis ball or spiky ball;
- (ii) athletes are encouraged to do their own soft tissue day to day maintenance, and pre and post-event management;
- (iii) soft tissue maintenance does not need the input of another person. Often it is unhelpful for athletes to feel that they are dependent on someone else to manage their muscles; and
- (iv) massage for specific conditions, or recovery from injury, should be dealt with by a qualified soft tissue therapist, who has the knowledge to treat these conditions safely and effectively.

## 16. Flexibility/Stretching exercises

There is a range of techniques and types of exercise for extending flexibility that involve the application of controlled force. These techniques can lead to the person applying the force coming into close proximity with the gymnast and having prolonged contact with areas of the gymnast's body. Personnel must follow the following guidelines when conducting flexibility or stretching activities:

- (a) use slow, progressive and prolonged stretching exercises, within the "discomfort zone", rather than what might be considered to be excessive force;
- (b) be sensitive to how the exercise might be perceived by the parents and children;

- (c) consider holding a parents' forum to explain the flexibility training techniques, so that the parent is more aware and therefore less likely to misinterpret the techniques being used;
- (d) where possible use stretching techniques that do not require or minimise physical contact;
- (e) be aware of hand placement when touching a gymnast;
- (f) do not use exercises that place the coaches and gymnast's body in "close proximity" and might be seen as unnecessary by the parent or observer; and
- (g) do not sit on or straddle a gymnast to encourage flexibility.

## 17. Personal Care

Taking into account the safeguarding concerns that can arise from coaches and others putting themselves in a position where they are alone with a child, GA views as unacceptable the routine provision of personal care to a Child by coaches or other Personnel.

GA requires that any personal care required during periods of time engaged in gymnastics activities (e.g. assistance in dressing, toileting etc.) only be carried out by someone whose sole role in relation to the Child is to address their personal care needs.

**Pre-school Children:** Parents of children under three years of age and of children who require assistance to use the toilet must remain with their child. GA would also recommend that clubs require parents of children aged 3-4 years remain nearby and contactable in case their child becomes distressed or requires assistance.

**Children with Disabilities:** Some children with disabilities, as a result of their need for practical assistance in daily living, may be more vulnerable to abuse and the risk may be greater where there are a number of carers. This may increase the likelihood of exposure to abusive behaviour and make it more difficult to set and maintain physical boundaries. It can be difficult, particularly for children with severe learning disabilities, to differentiate between different roles if carried out by the same person. This may lead to confusion and additional vulnerability. In order to provide adequate support to Children with a disability, GA advocates that either a professional carer approved by the child's family or the child's parent or guardian should carry out the role of "carer" during gymnastics related activities.

## 18. Transporting Children

Children are to be transported only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of gymnastics programs, events or services – e.g. they should not be given casual lifts outside transport to and from gymnastic related activity.

- (a) Children are to be transported only with prior written authorisation from the child's parent/guardian. Gaining approval involves providing information about the proposed journey, including:
  - (i) the form of transport proposed, such as private car, taxi, self-drive bus, bus with driver, train, plane or boat;
  - (ii) the reason for the journey;
  - (iii) the route to be followed, including any stops or side trips; and
  - (iv) details of anyone who will be present during the journey other than staff members who are Applicable Persons who are involved.

- (b) GA understands that in some smaller communities it may be appropriate for personnel to provide Children with transport to and from gymnastics. GA recommends that where possible this be avoided, however, where it cannot be avoided personnel must follow the points above and:
- (i) ensure that you are not left alone, unsupervised with a Child;
  - (ii) ensure that the Child sits in the back seat, appropriately secured; and
  - (iii) do not make any unnecessary stops.

## 19. Overnight Stays

Personnel must not stay overnight with a Child who participates in gymnastics services they deliver unless it is in direct relation to the service delivery of gymnastics (e.g. competitions) and is with the prior written authorisation of the parent/guardian.

- (a) Exemptions include:
- (i) Personnel who are immediate family members to the Child; and
  - (ii) Personnel who have a pre-existing relationship with a Child and the overnight stay is not related to gymnastics (e.g. you coach a young Child who is friends with your daughter and they have a sleep over at your house). All pre-existing relationships with Children where you may have contact with them outside of gymnastics must be disclosed to the relevant manager.
- (b) Overnight stays are to occur only with the authorisation of your designated senior manager and of the parents/guardians of the children involved. Clubs must not take children under 12 away abroad, interstate or intra-state overnight unless their parent/s or someone with legal parental responsibility can accompany them on the trip. Please refer to the GA [Travel Policy](#) and GA [Best Practice Travel Guidelines](#) for further information.
- (c) Practices and behaviours by Personnel during an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviour expected during delivery of gymnastic programs, services or events at all other times.
- (d) Minimum standards of conduct that must be observed by Personnel during an overnight stay include:
- (i) providing Children with privacy when bathing and dressing;
  - (ii) observing appropriate dress standards when Children are present – such as no exposure to adult nudity;
  - (iii) respecting the rights of Children to contact their parents, or others, at any time, but especially if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during the stay;
  - (iv) respecting parents expecting that their Children can, if they wish, make contact;
  - (v) ensuring children only share hotel rooms or bedrooms with children of the same gender;
  - (vi) ensuring Children who are transgender are consulted on their choice of sleeping arrangements;

- (vii) do not allow children to be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the internet or magazines;
- (viii) not leaving Children under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as hotel staff or friends;
- (ix) not allowing sleeping arrangements that may compromise the safety of Children such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or an adult sleeping in the same bed/room as a Child;
- (x) not allowing adults to share a room with a Child other than their own Child;
- (xi) not allowing adults to enter the Child's room or spend time in a Child's room (except in an emergency). If an individual adult presence is required, there should always be more than one Child in the room with the adult; and
- (xii) do not remove a Child's clothing unless you have their permission and have at least one other adult with you.

## 20. Change Room/Bathroom Arrangements

Personnel may be required to supervise Children in change rooms/bathrooms but must balance that requirement with a Child's right to privacy. In addition:

- (a) parents should only be in the changing room with their Children if the age range of the session is for an age group where parental help is generally required. This is normally around 8 years or under. Additional arrangements may be required if there are Children with disabilities in the group and these should be clearly reflected in the Affiliated Club policy;
- (b) clubs that are unable to provide safe and private changing room facilities are advised to suggest/ensure all Participants arrive wearing their leotards/shorts under their clothes. Suitable notices explaining the above conditions of use should also be posted prominently in and around the changing facility;
- (c) where an Affiliated Club has to use a shared changing/bathroom facility that is accessible by adults, the Affiliated Club should ensure that there is appropriate supervision at all times;
- (d) where changing facilities/bathrooms are not able to be supervised by staff (e.g. they are off the gym floor and out of sight) GA recommends Children use bathroom/change rooms in groups of 3;
- (e) Personnel must avoid one-to-one situations with a Child in a change room area;
- (f) Personnel must knock or announce themselves before entering change rooms;
- (g) Personnel must try to have at least one other adult with you when you are in a change room with children;
- (h) Personnel must make every effort to get changed in an individual closed cubicle;
- (i) Personnel must ensure adequate supervision in 'public' change rooms when they are used to prevent abuse by members of the public, adult service users, peer service users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a child's privacy;
- (j) Personnel must not enter a change room of the opposite sex;

- (k) Personnel must not isolate themselves and a Child from others in the change room;
- (l) Personnel must not allow mobile phones to be used in changing rooms; and
- (m) Personnel must not use bathroom facilities at the same time as a Child. Where possible adults/Personnel should have separate change room and bathroom facilities to children.
- (n) A 'buddy system' may be implemented whereby, in the absence of the availability of a parent or guardian to accompany a Child to the bathroom, Children can nominate 2 or more 'buddies' of a similar age and gender who can accompany them.