

Fact Sheet

Child Safe Standards for Officials & Volunteers

From 1 January 2017, the Child Safe Standards will apply to sporting organisations that operate and provide sporting services to children within Victoria (including National Sporting Associations). The Standards apply to organisations as a whole, not only the areas that work with children.

The standards apply to all personnel in our organisation including all volunteers.

In order to assist with the implementation of the Child Safe Standards the following points are to be used as a guide to help you identify what is good practice to be reinforced and encouraged and poor practice that should be avoided by our volunteers. This fact sheet should not be relied on as comprehensive advice as to your obligations, nor is it a substitute for reading all other relevant documents.

PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

DO:

- always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- make the experience of swimming fun and enjoyable
- treat all swimmers with respect and dignity, including Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability equally.
- avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the child.
- always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism – use positive and affirming language
- be an excellent role model; this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of children
- comply with the guidelines with respect to child protection (this includes Swimming Victoria and other organisations you are working with e.g. schools/clubs)

DO NOT:

- use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with children
- unnecessarily spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- engage in inappropriate meetings with a student that is not your own child
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allow or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- engage in inappropriate personal communications with a child that is not your own through any medium, including any online contact or interactions
- take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- develop 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students)
- allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse

If during your care you accidentally hurt a child, the child seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions and/or if the child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another colleague and make a written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.