



3 November 2016

Victorian Child Safety Standards

From 1 January 2017 the Victorian Child Safety Standards apply to clubs/centres, associations and coaching businesses. These principle-based standards are initially focused on policy, education and capacity building.

Your club/association/coaching business will likely already have many relevant policies, processes and practices in place. This advice on the Child Safety Standards will help you to start to identify and address any **gaps**.

As your first step towards meeting the new Child Safety Standards we suggest that you review the below materials at your next committee meeting, with your club's coach in attendance.

1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including effective leadership arrangements

You, your committee and your club's coach have a responsibility to take the lead at your club/association with a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety issues. The first step towards this is awareness of the topic. In this respect we refer you to the [Australian Sports Commission's online training](#), specifically to complete the Play By The Rules – Child Protection module (30 minutes). You will need to register to complete the online training, and browse to find the correct module.

2. A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

The expert advice from the Australian Childhood Foundation is that a unified policy or statement across all of national, state and local levels is best practice in setting the child safety culture within a sport. As such Tennis Victoria intends to embrace Tennis Australia's policy (once adopted), and encourages all clubs, associations and coaching businesses to do likewise. Current advice from Tennis Australia is that this child safe policy is likely to be incorporated into the national Member Protection Policy, due to be distributed in early December.

3. A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

The leading resource is the Australian Sports Commission's *Play by the Rules* [Guidelines for Working with Children](#), which you can consider and customise.

4. Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

A Working with Children Check is a required screening practice for adults who have unsupervised contact with children as part of their role. An interactive tool to determine if this is required [is available](#).

Coaches who are Tennis Australia Coach Members are required to complete a Working with Children Check as part of their membership. Tennis Victoria advocates that all coaches be



Tennis Australia Coach Members, and encourages that clubs only engage Tennis Australia Coach Members.

Clubs are also encouraged to use additional tools, such as those detailed in the [Recruitment Practices for Child Safe Organisations fact sheet](#), in determining the suitability of individuals for roles that involve working with children.

5. Process for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Tennis Australia's [Member Protection Policy](#) applies to all clubs and members.

The child protection sections of the Member Protection Policy are consistent with Victorian laws that require mandatory reporting by any adult who has a reasonable belief that child sexual abuse has occurred. More information on this topic is available from the [Department of Justice](#).

6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

The Victorian Commission for Children and Young People have a comprehensive guide on this topic. We recommend that you review pages [46 to 49 of this guide](#) regarding a risk management approach to your club's physical and online environment.

7. Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

Tennis Australia has engaged the Australian Childhood Foundation to conduct a national review to help implement best practice policies and standards. Tennis Victoria understands this project will enhance the ability of Victorian clubs/associations to best align with this Standard, and we will communicate updates to affiliates as appropriate.

Additional resources

New resources are continually becoming available as the sporting industry moves towards the implementation of the Victorian Child Safety Standards from 1 January 2017.

Vicsport, the peak industry body for sporting organisations, has worked in conjunction with Sport & Recreation Victoria to develop a number of guides related to the Child Safety Standards. These are available on their website: <https://vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards>

In particular, Vicsport have made available a [12 minute summary video](#) on the Child Safety Standards based on a presentation to State Sporting Organisations, delivered by TV's legal advisors, Lander & Rogers.