



**Gymnastics**  
Victoria

# **CHILD SAFE POLICY**

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

<b>Date of Approval:</b>	<b>25 May 2020</b>
<b>Version:</b>	<b>3</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 Victoria (GV) 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 on	Version	Date Endorsed	Approved by	Content reviewed/Purpose
	1	August 2016	GV Board	Policy Developed (approved as Child Safe and Child Friendly Policy)
31/10/2019	2			Policy Revised & Adapted in line with GA's Child Safe Policy 2019
17/03/2020	3	25 May 2020	GV Board	Policy revised & adapted in line with changes to GA CSP & GV Governance Committee feedback

# CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION.....	6
2.	PURPOSE.....	6
3.	WHO IS BOUND BY THIS POLICY.....	6
4.	ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES .....	6
5.	INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES.....	7
6.	RELATED DOCUMENTS.....	7
7.	COMMUNICATION .....	8
8.	WHAT IS A BREACH OF THIS POLICY .....	8
9.	DISCIPLINARY MEASURES.....	8
10.	POSITION STATEMENTS .....	8
11.	CHILD SAFETY LEGISLATION .....	11
12.	GV's APPROACH TO FAMILY VIOLENCE .....	11
13.	SCREENING AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK REQUIREMENTS.....	12
14.	FORMS OF CHILD ABUSE.....	14
15.	IDENTIFYING CHILD ABUSE .....	16
16.	REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS.....	18
17.	GLOSSARY OF TERMS .....	22
	ATTACHMENT A: PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS .....	24
	ATTACHMENT B: FLOW CHART SUMMARY OF ATTACHMENT A, PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS.....	33
	ATTACHMENT C: CONFIDENTIAL RECORD OF CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATION FORM...	34
	ATTACHMENT D: MAKING A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION .....	37
	ATTACHMENT E: SPECTRUM OF BEHAVIOURS BY BRAVEHEARTS* .....	39
	ATTACHMENT F: CHILD ABUSE RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL .....	40
	ATTACHMENT G: NATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES .....	42
	ATTACHMENT H: CHILD SAFE CODES OF BEHAVIOUR.....	44

# Child Safe Commitment Statement

Gymnastics in Australia 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 and adults with disability.

Gymnastics Australia and all its 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.

In 2018 the Gymnastics Australia President and Presidents of the eight Association Members co-signed an historic Child Safe Commitment Statement, pledging to retain a prioritised focus on ensuring gymnastics remained a child safe environment.

Following the release of the comprehensively reviewed Member Protection Policy and Child Safe Policy in 2019, the Gymnastics Australia CEO and Executive Directors of all the Association Members also co-signed this Commitment Statement to further strengthen the focus on the welfare and wellbeing of all children participating in Gymnastics.

As the leaders responsible for Gymnastics around the country, we will work together to ensure a child safety culture and a safe and inclusive environment for all children participating in gymnastics clubs throughout Australia. 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 that these groups and individuals provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of children involved in our sport.

We will support all Affiliated Clubs to implement policies and procedures, from human resource management to reporting processes, with conscious action and proactive behaviours to protect the safety and welfare of children and ensure all members feel confident to report inappropriate behaviour. We recognise that Affiliated Clubs, administrators, volunteers, parents and participants must understand the important responsibilities they each have in relation to child safety and we are committed to educating our community in this regard. Together we pledge to provide an environment where children feel safe, respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

The Executive Directors of Gymnastics in Australia signed this Child Safe Commitment Statement on the 19th March 2019.

## Our Personnel's Commitment to Child Safety

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

- (a) have been provided with a copy, read, and understood the GV Child Safe Policy and the GV Member Protection Policy;
- (b) have been provided with a copy, read, and understood the GV 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 GV to ensure and promote the safety of Children participating in activities provided by GV; 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 GV 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 GV'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 GV'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, GV 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 GV'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 GV:

- 3.1 persons appointed or elected to boards, committees and sub-committees;
- 3.2 employees, contractors and volunteers of GV (including presenters);
- 3.3 Members of the Gymsport Committees;
- 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 GV; 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 GV.

This Policy will continue to apply to an Applicable Person even after they have stopped their association or employment with GV, 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.

GV 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.

## 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 Attachment C1 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 GV Board is responsible for the endorsement of the GV Child Safe Policy. It delegates the development and implementation of this Policy to the GV CEO.

## 6. **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

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The following GV 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 Privacy Policy;
- 6.4 Constitution;
- 6.5 Grievance and Discipline procedures;
- 6.6 Social Media Policy;
- 6.7 Photographic and Filming Policy and Authorised Photographers Agreement

## 7. **COMMUNICATION**

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

- 7.1 on our website [www.gymnasticsvictoria.org.au](http://www.gymnasticsvictoria.org.au)
- 7.2 in age-accessible formats for Children;
- 7.3 during recruitment and induction processes;
- 7.4 at all GV 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**

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

GV:

- (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 Codes of Behaviour, that are approved and endorsed by the GVCEO and Board that outline 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) GV 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 12 of this Policy for detailed information regarding GV'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) GV 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.

GV 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) GV will promote the involvement and participation of Children in developing and maintaining child-safe environments.
- (b) GV involves Children when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. GV listens to their views and respects what they have to say.
- (c) GV 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 GV 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 GV CEO with ultimate approval required by the GV Board. The GV 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. GV 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. CHILD SAFETY LEGISLATION

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### 11.1 Child Safe Standards

All organisations in Victoria that provide services or facilities for children are required to comply with [Child Safe Standards](#) (CSS) to ensure that the safety of children is promoted, child abuse is prevented and allegations of child abuse are properly responded to. GV expects all affiliated clubs to take responsibility for and comply with the standards.

### 11.2 Failure to Protect Offence

As well as complying with the CSS Victoria deems it a criminal offence for failing to protect a child under the age of 16 from a risk of sexual abuse. The offence applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so. For more information about this offence visit the [Victorian Department of Justice website](#).

## 12. GV's APPROACH TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

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Family Violence is a significant issue in Australia that impacts thousands of families and children. Sport can play a vital part in the solution to end violence against women.

### 12.1 Reports of Family Violence involving children

Gymnastics Victoria takes all disclosures and reports of family violence seriously. Where children are involved applicable members are mandated to report it to authorities. Refer to Section 16 for more information on how to report allegations of family violence involving children.

### 12.2 Intervention Orders/Family Law Court Orders/Children's Court Orders at GV Events/Programs

Gymnastics Victoria is committed to supporting members who have experienced or may currently be experiencing family violence. Gymnastics Victoria will take particular care at GV events/programs when an Intervention Order (IVO), a Family Law Court Order (FLCO) and/or a Children's Court Order (CCO) has been issued to protect a child or young person. The protective parent must disclose and provide copies of all relevant court orders to GV personnel prior to or at the event. GV will endeavour to create a safe environment that may include, where possible;

- (a) Identifying appropriate entry and exit strategies;
- (b) Protecting the identity of the child or young person on any GV social media platforms;
- (c) Notifying event security or staff of any potential risks (e.g. if the respondent is known to stalk the family, event staff/security can be issued with a physical description of the respondent to try and prevent entry to the event);
- (d) Calling police if necessary.

## 13. 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.

### 13.1 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 GV 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) screening of any previous disciplinary measures imposed by a past employer of another governing body (e.g. checking the USAG Permanently Ineligible Members list);
- (g) GV 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; and
- (h) GV requires staff and volunteers to pass the recruitment and screening process prior to commencing their engagement with GV.

GV has developed a Recruitment and Screening guidelines to assist personnel and members with child safe screening. Visit the GV website for a copy of the guide.

### 13.2 Screening of Technical Members

GV reserves the right to screen any potential or current GV Technical Members if there is a concern about their suitability to work with or around children and young people. GV will use the recruitment standard determined in section 13.1 to determine a person's suitability to hold a technical membership.

### 13.3 Police Checks

GV 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.

GV requires that any person who works directly with Children who has resided overseas in the past 10 years for a period of more than 12 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.

#### 13.4 **Members and Personnel required to obtain a Working with Children Check (WWCC)**

Working with children check laws aim to prevent people who pose a risk from working with Children as paid employees or volunteers. GV has strict requirements about who is required to hold a valid WWCC under this policy regardless of Victorian WWCC exemptions. The following key people must have a valid WWCC:

- (a) All GV staff and Board members;
- (b) Event Staff paid by GV for their services (excluding bump in and bump out);
- (c) Volunteers (including judges and presenter's or any person who receives an honorarium from GV);
- (d) Relevant contractors who may have unsupervised access to children;
- (e) GV Technical Committee members;
- (f) Anyone else who GV staff feel require a WWCC due to the nature of the work that they are undertaking for GV.
- (g) All affiliated club staff and volunteers (including coaches and any officials) likely to have contact with gymnasts (and other children), which needs to be signed off annually as part of the affiliation process. Clubs which do not comply with their legal obligations will be found to have not complied with the GV affiliation requirements and will be disaffiliated.
- (h) All affiliated club personnel including owners, Committee Members, Volunteers, Coaches and Judges and anyone else who has contact with children. Any costs associated with gaining a valid working with children check is as per each club's discretion.

#### 13.5 **WWCC Applications / Renewals**

GV requires proof that the WWCC application has been processed and the individual has passed before the commencement of any role or position for a person required to hold a WWCC under this policy.

WWCC's can be renewed online (via the WWCC website) from six months before its expiry date until three months after it has expired. GV will not accept any expired WWCC's unless the individual has proof they have renewed their card within 3 months of the expiry date.

WWCC's renewed 3 month's post the expiry date will not be accepted until the individual has proof that the new application has been processed that they have passed.

#### 13.6 **WWCC Exemptions**

GV will not accept Victorian or Federal police officer exemptions, non-practicing Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) cards, or an Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (APHRA) registration.

#### 13.7 **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/Negative Notice (or if based in another State the equivalent requirement) the GV CEO may dismiss that person and/or revoke, suspend or add conditions to their technical membership or prohibit them from participating in GV activities.

### 13.8 Travelling to other states or territories

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.

### 13.9 Working with children checks at GV Events

Any person working or volunteering at a GV organised event who requires accreditation (e.g. coach, judge, chaperone, team manager, medical staff, administrator etc.) must provide GV with proof they hold a current copy of their WWCC card in person when collecting their accreditation.

GV reserves the right to withhold accreditation if WWCC 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 WWCC 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 GV 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 GV in its absolute discretion, spectators or Participants who are participating in the event will not be required to hold or present a WWCC.

In instances where a person is working or volunteering at a GV 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 GV 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.

Please check the Gymnastics Australia Policy for WWCC requirements at GA events.

### 13.10 Storage of Working with Children Checks at GV Events

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

## 14. 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
Bullying	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



	<p>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 formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, in internet chatrooms, on social media or by other technological channels.</p>
<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>	<p>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.</p>

<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.

## 15. 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.

### 15.1 Indicators of Child Abuse

Abuse Type	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
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<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	<p>Emotional abuse/psychological abuse may cause delays in physical, emotional or cognitive development.</p> <p>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>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 as occurred</li> </ul>

<p><b>Sexual Abuse</b></p>	<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>
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## 16. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

GV has zero tolerance of child abuse, and we will treat all allegations of child abuse and/or misconduct with a Child seriously, consistently and with a high degree of sensitivity. GV acknowledges that every child has the right to be heard, protected and supported and to have their concerns managed appropriately and with sensitivity. GV 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.

GV will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

### 16.1 Prohibitions

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

- (a) discussing any concerns or allegations with unauthorised persons – within or outside GV – 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 GV's commitment to ensuring privacy, confidentiality and natural justice; and
- (b) making deliberately false, misleading or vexatious allegations.

### 16.2 Obligations

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

- (a) any contravention of this Policy;

- (b) breaches of GV'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 GV's policies or may otherwise have the potential to harm a Child.

### 16.3 Rights

Applicable Persons retain 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.

### 16.4 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 GV 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 GV 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 15-18 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.

### 16.5 Special Considerations

- (a) GV 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) GV 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. GV recommends seeking advice on communicating with people with a disability where required.

## 16.6 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 GV 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*.

## 16.7 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 GV CEO may dismiss that person and/or revoke, suspend or add conditions to their technical membership.

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

If Applicable Persons involved in our organisation are investigated or subject to a serious complaint at another organisation or their place of employment that relates to child abuse/misconduct with a child, the GV CEO may dismiss that person and/or revoke, suspend or add conditions to their technical membership.

## 16.9 Anonymous complaints

In cases of Child abuse there can be many barriers that community members face when reporting. To help reduce these barriers GV 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 GV 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 GV 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 GV 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 Child Safety Coordinator (or similar role).

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

GV expects all Member Associations and Affiliated Clubs to keep records of all allegations of child abuse/ misconduct with a Child to ensure GV 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 GV 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.

GV 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, GV 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 15.11.

## 16.11 Legislative Requirements

Victoria has specific legislation regarding mandatory reporting and reportable conduct which includes:

- (a) **Failure to disclose child sexual abuse offence:** The [criminal offence for failure to disclose child sexual abuse](#) came into effect on 27 October 2014. Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 years of age must report that information to police unless they have a reasonable excuse. A reasonable excuse may include fear for safety or where the information has already been reported. The offence applies to **all adults** in Victoria, not just professionals who work with children.
- (b) **Mandatory Reporting:** Mandatory reporting is the legal requirement for certain professional groups to report a reasonable belief of child physical or sexual abuse to child protection authorities. In Victoria police officers, registered medical practitioners, nurses including midwives, registered teachers, and school principals are currently mandated to report a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from physical and sexual abuse. For more information about Mandatory reporting Requirements please visit [The Department of Health and Human Services website](#).
- (c) **Reportable Conduct Scheme (RCS):** Under the RCS, some organisations are required to notify the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) of all allegations of reportable conduct by employees and volunteers. For more information about the scheme, what organisations are required to make reports and what conduct is reportable [visit the CCYP's website](#).

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.

## 16.12 Confidentiality and Privacy

GV 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.

## 16.13 Support

When an allegation of child abuse has been made GV 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**.

## 17. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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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 e.g. coaches, volunteers, GV Personnel, Affiliated Club personnel, club owners, board members, Member Association staff and executives.
<b>Authorised Person</b>	Means: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. in the case of allegations being handled at a national (GA) level, the GA CEO;</li> <li>2. in the case of allegations being handled at a state / territory level, the relevant Association Member CEO (or corresponding role); and</li> <li>3. 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> </ol>
<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 GV as constituted from time to time
<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 GV 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>Do not express shock, panic, disbelief or judgement. Remain calm</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 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>Do not challenge or undermine the child.</p> <p>Do not ask suggestive or leading questions.</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 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>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><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 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"</b></p>	<p>Do not contact the Respondent.</p>

**Allegation Form” (Attachment C of this Policy) and then store the record securely.** Tell the child that you may need to take some notes while they are talking to accurately record what they are saying.

**Report all allegations or concern to the nominated person as described in this Policy**

**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 GV's “Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation Form” (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 state level, including any incidents that occur at a GV organised activity or event, and the most serious cases from Affiliated Club level (as reasonably determined by GV at its discretion) should be referred to GV.
  - (c) If an allegation is handled at an Affiliated Club level, the relevant person(s) handling the allegation within the respective Affiliated Club may contact the GV 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 all Personnel 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 child protection contact details; **or**

- (b) senior Personnel or the applicable designated Affiliated Club or GV 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; **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 a 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>	<b>Critical</b>
<b>Medium Risk</b>	<b>Non-Critical</b>
<b>Low Risk</b>	<b>Non-Critical</b>

<b>Critical Allegations may include but are not limited to:</b>	<b>Non-Critical Allegations may include but are not limited to:</b>
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
<u>Any</u> 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 do not fall within the definition of an Applicable Person, the Handling Organisation must provide appropriate support to the Child, their 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 GV 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 (i.e. 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 15.11 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.

### Reportable Conduct Scheme

Please refer to [the CCYP's website](#) to determine if you need to make a report under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

### 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 GV who will then report the allegation to GA, who, at its discretion, may report the allegation to the Board;
- (b) GV level, then the staff member at GV who is 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 (GV, 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 GV, it should be done so via the child safe email address at [cp@gymnasticsvictoria.org.au](mailto:cp@gymnasticsvictoria.org.au)

This is to ensure that GV 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 GV and stores documents in a safe and confidential place to centralise and secure the information.

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

If GV has 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 GV and provide them with the above information about the outcome of the complaint. GV 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"/> Grooming <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual exploitation	<input type="checkbox"/> Other inappropriate behaviour and/or breach of Child Safe Policy/Child Safe Code of Conduct Please detail..... ..... ..... .....

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: MAKING A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION**

This information was taken from the [Victorian Department of Health and Human Services website](#):

### **Reporting child abuse**

*To make a report to child protection a person needs to have formed a reasonable belief that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect, and that their parent has not protected or is unlikely to protect the child from harm of that type. A reasonable belief does not require proof.*

### **For immediate help**

- To report concerns that are life threatening, ring Victoria Police: **000**
- To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child after hours, call the After Hours Child Protection Emergency Service: **13 12 78**.

### **When to make a report**

Child protection receive reports about children when there are concerns the child is in need of protection. A child in need of protection is a child who has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect, and their parent has not protected or is unlikely to protect the child from harm of that type.

To make a report to child protection a person needs to have formed a reasonable belief that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect, and that their parent has not protected or is unlikely to protect the child from harm of that type.

Information provided to child protection when a report is made needs to be sufficiently detailed for child protection to identify the child at risk of harm.

Where concerns relate to an alleged perpetrator of abuse, who may pose a risk more generally to all children, the concerns should be reported to Police.

### **Contact Child Protection**

In Victoria, reports to child protection must be made to a protective intervener, or other appropriately delegated officer. Reports cannot be made via the department's website or email, as staff who monitor the department's website are not delegated officers. Almost all reports are made to child protection by phone.

To make a report, you should contact the child protection intake service covering the local government area (LGA) where the child normally resides.

Telephone numbers to make a report during business hours (8.45am -5.00pm), Monday to Friday, are listed below.

- North Division intake: 1300 664 977
- South Division intake: 1300 655 795
- East Division intake: 1300 360 391
- West Division intake - metropolitan: 1300 664 977
- West Division intake - rural and regional: 1800 075 599

If you are not sure which number to call, check the [Child protection contacts page](#) for details on the LGAs covered by each intake service.

**If you are worried about a child's wellbeing, but don't believe the child is in need of protection**

## Child FIRST or The Orange Door

If you have significant concern for the wellbeing of a child, but do not believe they are at risk of significant harm, and where the immediate safety of the child will not be compromised, a referral to Child FIRST or The Orange Door may be appropriate.

Child FIRST, as the access point for family services, is progressively transitioning to The Orange Door. The Orange Door is the new access point for families who need assistance with the care and wellbeing of children, including those experiencing family violence, to contact the services they need to be safe and supported.

Referring to Child FIRST or The Orange Door would be appropriate where families:

- Are experiencing significant parenting problems that may be affecting the child's development
- Are experiencing family conflict, including family breakdown
- Are under pressure due to a family member's physical or mental illness, substance abuse, disability or bereavement
- Are young, isolated or unsupported
- Are experiencing significant social or economic disadvantage that may adversely impact on a child's care or development.

Contact numbers to make a referral in each local government area are listed on the [Child and family services information, referral and support teams \(Child FIRST\) page](#).

The identity of a reporter must remain confidential, unless:

- The reporter chooses to inform the child or family of the report
- The reporter consents in writing to their identity as the reporter being disclosed
- A court or tribunal decides it needs this information in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child
- A court or tribunal decides that in the interests of justice the evidence needs to be given.

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

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

Spectrum of Behaviour – by Bravehearts	
<b>Child Safe Behaviours</b>	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. e.g. appropriately following the GA Child Safe Policy, guidelines and Codes of Behaviour
<b>Inappropriate Behaviours</b>	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. e.g. yelling at and berating a child for under performing
<b>Unacceptable Behaviours</b>	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. e.g. forming a close bond with a particular athlete and showing favouritism.
<b>Abusive/Illegal Behaviours</b>	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. e.g. breaching GA Child Safe Policy, Guidelines, Codes of Conduct and Child Protection Laws.

\*[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 F: 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?	Yes	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 G: 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.**

### [1800 Respect](#)

Call 1800 737 732

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.

### [1800 THE LINE](#)

Call 1800 695 463

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.

### [Lifeline](#)

Call 13 11 14

A generalist and crisis telephone counselling, information and referral service, provided by trained volunteers who are supported by professional staff.

### [Blue Knot Foundation](#)

Call 1300 657 380

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.

### [Bravehearts](#)

Call 1800 272 831

Open to anyone wanting information, advice, referrals and support regarding child sexual assault.

### [Child Wise National Child Abuse Prevention Helpline](#)

Call 1800 99 10 99

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.

### [Children and Young People with Disability Australia](#)

Call 1800 222 660

National peak body for Children with disability. Provides information and systemic representation

### [Counselling Online](#)

A free online and SMS/text-based service providing assistance to Australian residents concerned about alcohol and other drugs

### [Headspace](#)

Call 1800 650 890

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.

### [Healing Foundation](#)

Service to help build the capacity of Indigenous organisations and support the development of the Link Up network

### [Kids Helpline](#)

Call 1800 55 1800

Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.

### [People with Disability Australia](#)

Call 1800 422 015  
TTY: 1800 422 016

National telephone line to provide information and referrals to people with disabilities

**[QLife](#)**

**Call 1800 184 527**

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).

**[Sexual Assault  
Counselling Australia](#)**

**Call 1800 211 028**

National telephone counselling service for people who have experienced abuse. Face-to-face counselling is available in New South Wales.

## **ATTACHMENT H: CHILD SAFE CODES OF BEHAVIOUR**

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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 GV, 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 GV'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 GV 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

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

## 8. Supervision

GV 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

GV 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

GV 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 [GV 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 GV 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. GV 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

Personnel should at all times adhere to the following guidelines as well as the [GV Photographic and Filming Policy](#) when photographing 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 GV 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.

Images of children cannot be used inappropriately or illegally. GV may take images or otherwise record images of Gymnasts and attendees at GV events for the purposes of promotion of Gymnastics or by a designated GV contracted photographer except where informed in writing by a member that they do not wish to have their image captured.

GV requires that persons obtain permission before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent/guardian knows the way the image will be used.

GV also requires the privacy of others to be respected and prohibits the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

### 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, GV 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 GV, 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 GV with a current copy of their accreditation or qualification. This information will be stored securely on the GV CRM system (iMIS). It is the responsibility of each person proposing to undertake massage in these circumstances to provide GV with these details.

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

- (a) soft tissue maintenance treatment can be undertaken by gymnasts themselves using a foam roller, tennis ball or spiky ball;
- (b) athletes are encouraged to do their own soft tissue day to day maintenance, and pre and post-event management;
- (c) 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
- (d) 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, GV views as unacceptable the routine provision of personal care to a Child by coaches or other Personnel.

GV 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. GV 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, GV 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) GV understands that in some smaller communities it may be appropriate for personnel to provide Children with transport to and from gymnastics. GV 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. GV strongly recommends that clubs do not take children under 10 away abroad, interstate or intra- state overnight unless their parent/s or someone with legal parental responsibility can accompany them on the trip.

(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) GV 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.