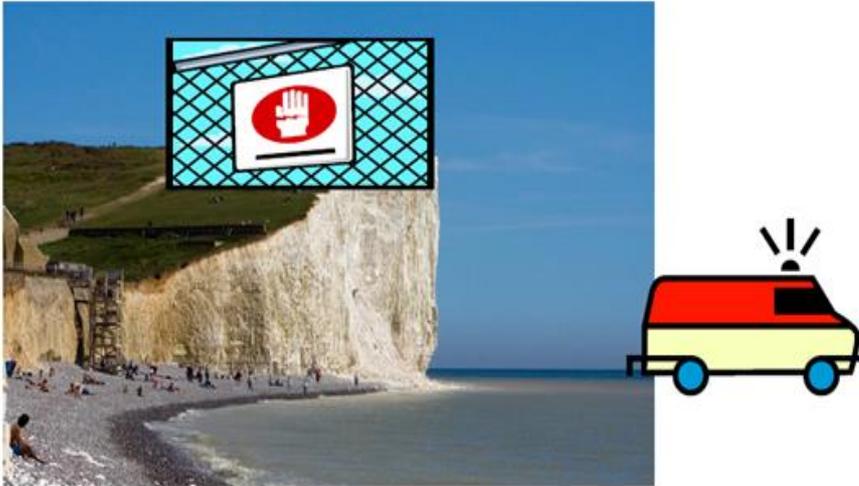




Child Protection Policy - Tennis Southland (TS)



Policy Statement:

Tennis Southland (TS) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm and exploitation while participating in our activities. Staff and volunteers will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children. This policy acknowledges that TS has a responsibility both under legislation and in society to provide a safe environment that ensures all children participating in our events/programmes/activities are:

- treated with dignity and respect
- free from physical, emotional and sexual abuse
- entitled to physical and emotional well-being; and
- all those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work, including those that do not have a specific role in relation to safeguarding children, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Scope

This policy covers TS staff, whether paid or voluntary, including those staff contracted or on placement. The policy also links in with the TS Team Travel and Athlete Care protocol

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure TS provides services in a manner consistent with section 6 of the Children Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 and the Vulnerable Children Act 2014
- Provide guidelines for TS staff/volunteers who work with children and young people
- Raise awareness of the importance of our role in maintaining the safety, welfare, and interests of any child or young person we come into contact with
- Identify procedures to follow should a suspected case arise or an accusation be made about inappropriate behaviour by providing training, support, and guidance

Definitions

- “Child and Young Person” - for the purpose of this policy a “child” means a boy or girl under the age of 14 years and “young person” means a boy or girl of or over the age of 14 years but under 17 years (Children, Young Person, and Their Families Act 1989, Section 2).
- “Staff” – anyone working for TS, whether paid, voluntary, contracted or on placement.
- “Employees” – those formally employed by TS on a casual, fixed term, part time or full time basis.
- “Child abuse” - means the harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person.” (Section 2, Children and Young Persons Amendment Act, 1994)

Types of Child Abuse

- **Sexual abuse** “is any act or acts that results in the sexual exploitation of a child or young person, whether consensual or not”.
- **Emotional abuse** “is any act or omission that results in impaired physical functioning, injury and / or development of a child or young adult”.
- **Neglect** “is any act or omission that results in impaired psychological, social, intellectual and / or emotional functioning and development of a child or young person”
- **Physical abuse** “is a non-accidental act on a child that results in physical harm”
- **Cumulative harm** “is the existence of compounded experiences of multiple episodes of abuse or ‘layers’ of neglect. The unremitting daily impact on the child can be profound and exponential, covering multiple dimensions of the child’s life”

TS Believes That:

- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity, have a right to participate in sport and recreation that is safe and where they are protected from potential or actual injury, abuse and other harm.
- Children should feel respected, valued and encouraged to enjoy their participation and to reach their full potential.
- TS has a duty of care when it comes to children and should take steps to ensure that children can participate safely in the activities it provides. That includes protecting them from: injury, bullying, all forms of abuse, age-inappropriate training regimes and unsafe equipment/and or facilities. TS will work in partnership with children and their parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

Strategy:

In order to ensure safe sport for children, TS adopts the following approach:

Prevent those who have been identified as causing harm to children from having contact with our children.

- It is important that best effort is made to ensure that appropriate people are working with our children. TS recruitment process: For teams’ events, the head coach/coaches are professionally qualified. Appropriate police vetting is undertaken and references followed up if needed. The same process and considerations should be used when appointing team managers.

Remove/minimize any risks of accident or harm to children

- TS has a Health & Safety (H & S) protocol. A hazard identification and assessment process is in place. Tennis club members are encouraged to report hazards and accidents.

Guidelines

TS's commitment to the well-being and safety of the child or young person means that the interest and welfare of the child or young person will be the primary consideration when any decision is made about suspected child abuse. Professional ethics will provide the basis of all processes and actions taken. The privacy of those concerned will be respected. TS supports the roles of statutory agencies (the Police and Child, Youth and Family) in the investigation of abuse and will report cases of suspected child abuse to these agencies according to the processes outlined in this policy. Deciding who will inform the parent or caregiver will be the responsibility of the operations manager and TS board chairman

Identify and stop inappropriate behaviour if it occurs.

- TS has codes of conduct that outlines our expectations in terms of behaviour for staff, volunteers, participants, parents and supporters. Maintaining good practices amongst coaches, officials and volunteers means the safety and wellbeing of children/young people must be paramount at all times; children are treated with dignity and respect and good practice is promoted to reduce the possibility of abusive situations. The relationship between TS coaches and club officials, who hold a position of trust and responsibility with children, must be professional and appropriate at all times.

Code of Conduct Rules/Guidelines - for coaches, officials and volunteers:

- a) Always work in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- b) Secure parental consent to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- c) Ensure any form of abuse directed at a child from others, whether this is from another child or adult, is challenged and reported.
- d) Where a coach believes it is necessary to touch an athlete in order to correct their technique, it is important that they: Ensure the child is made aware of the purpose of the contact and gives consent.

e) All coaches, officials and volunteers must ensure they never:

- * Take, or be in the presence of children/young people in secluded places, where they would be alone.
- * Reduce a child/young person to tears as a form of control
- * Deliberately make a child feel diminished, humiliated or embarrassed.
- * Use inappropriate language, or allow other children to use inappropriate language unchallenged (e.g. swearing, name calling/put downs, sarcasm, innuendo, sexualised connotations, culturally or racially offensive comments)
- * Leave a venue before all players have been collected or are continuing to be supervised by appropriate adults.
- * Engage in rough, physically or sexually provocative games.
- * Take photographs of, or film children without parental consent, unless for the purpose of approved Tennis Southland promotional and marketing purposes, which could be displayed on TS's website and/or social media platforms.

Code of conduct Rules/Guidelines - for supporters:

Treat all players (TS players and their opponents) with the same respect, using correct and proper language at all times.

- * Respect the rights, dignity and worth of fellow parents, team managers and spectators.
- * Understand that final team decisions and disputes are to be resolved by the team manager.
- * Never punish or belittle players for losing or making mistakes.
- * Focus on efforts and performance rather than results.
- * Be a positive role model for all young players having fun and aspiring to improve

Handling Disclosures of Abuse – What to Do:

TS's Code of Conduct for dealing with disclosures of abuse by the victim or another person - such as a sibling or parent/caregiver.

- * Listen – and tell them that no one deserves to be hurt and that it was not their fault. Let them know you're glad they told you.
- * Ensure the child/young person's immediate safety. Try not to alert the alleged abuser.
- * Do not ask leading questions (as this can contaminate evidence), but assess safety by asking open-ended questions, such as: "Who did this?", "When and where did this happen?"
- * Keep questions to a minimum & record the information
- * Discuss confidentiality and its exclusions and that you will need to tell someone else.
- * Consider involvement of Police and/or Child Youth & Family

Complaint and Investigative process – What to Do:

Any breach of the above Codes of Conduct is to be reported immediately to TS, via the operations manager, who should decide what action internally and externally may need to take place. On receipt of a formal complaint, both the complainant and the accused are to be interviewed separately by two members of the TS Code of Conduct sub-committee. If the complaint is considered to be justified, the accused as a minimum is to be given a "Formal Written Warning" that such behavior is unacceptable and must write a formal apology to the complainant. If any further incidents are reported, the accused would be asked to resign or remove themselves from TS duties and involvement and, where applicable, would henceforth be unable to represent TS in competition. Any Code of Conduct breaches deemed at the very high end could involve the Police and/or Child Youth & Family.

Policy Review

Tennis Southland's Child Protection Policy to be reviewed by the TS board and/or operations manager, on an annual basis. **Next review - November, 2018.**