



Western Region Football
League

July 2022

CHILD
SAFEGUARDING
SELF-AUDIT TOOLKIT



Introduction

This Child Safeguarding self-audit toolkit is designed to allow your club to meet the minimum requirements of the eleven Child Safe Standards. This toolkit provides information on where to find relevant Child Safeguarding information, how to communicate the information with members and various other strategies to improve Child Safeguarding practices at your club.

This toolkit is by no means a one-stop shop; Child Safeguarding is an ongoing commitment and is ever-changing. Thus, you must aim to improve your practices continually. The WRFL Child Safeguarding Handbook contains additional information for your club to utilise and should be the main point of reference.

Questions in this self-audit toolkit have been grouped into three different sections:

1. Club Safeguarding Policies and Procedures
2. Club Risk Management
3. Club Leadership and Governance

How to use this toolkit?

This toolkit has been separated into two sections, with each section complimenting the other.

Section 1: Self-audit tool.

The self-audit tool has questions for your committee to answer. Each question can be answered with 'In Place,' 'Partially in Place,' or 'Not in Place.' You will then be able to complete the 'Action Required' text box depending on the answer to your question.

Section 2: Action Required

The action required portion of the toolkit goes through ideas your club can put into place to meet the minimum requirements of the relevant question. From these ideas, you will then be able to fill in the 'Action Required' text box area.

Note: This toolkit is NOT designed to be a one-stop shop. It is a necessary toolkit to understand where your club's Child Safeguarding practices are at, what needs to be improved and how to improve them at a minimum level; continual improvement on top of the recommendations found in this document is required.



Self-audit tool

Child Safeguarding Policies & Practice

Activity	In place	Partially in place	Not in place	Action required	Timeframe for actions
1. Does your club display your club's commitment to child safeguarding (posters, info sheets)?					
2. Are you providing regular information to members regarding child safety?					
3. Has one or more of your committee/members undertaken safeguarding training?					
4. Is your club welcoming and inclusive of young people (e.g., Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kids, Kids from multicultural backgrounds, kids with disability, LGBTIQ+ kids)?					
5. Are your club members/parents aware of the WRFL's child-safe policy and know where to find it?					



Activity	In place	Partially in place	Not in place	Action required	Timeframe for actions
6. Are your club members/parents aware of your code of conduct for participants, parents, volunteers/staff, and know where to find it?					
7. Are you club members/parents aware of your complaint handling, reporting procedure, and incident report form?					
8. Does your club have guidelines in place that dictate how adults communicate with children via the online environment?					
9. Does your club discuss the safeguarding procedures with all the children and young people within the club and advise them to speak to if they have a concern?					
10. Does your club discuss the safeguarding procedures with all the coaches and volunteers within the club?					



Club Risk Management

Activity	In place	Partially in place	Not in place	Action required	Timeframe for actions
1. Do you feel that if an incident or suspicion of child abuse occurred at your club, it could ensure obligations were met?					
2. Does your club annually review its compliance against the Child Safe Standards and other legislative obligations related to reporting?					
3. Has your club screened all employed staff/volunteers in accordance with the WRFL's Child Safe Policy screening requirements?					
4. Have you maintained accurate screening records and stored them securely? 5. Have you stored all photographs of children and young people securely with restricted member access?					
5. Do your club members know how to respond to and report suspicious or allegations of child abuse?					



Club Leadership & Governance

Activity	In place	Partially in place	Not in place	Action required	Timeframe for actions
1. Is Child Safety a regular discussion topic at your club's committee meetings?					
2. Does your club have a Member Protection Officer or Child Safety Officer dedicated to ensuring the safety of children and young people?					

Action Required

This section of the toolkit goes through ideas your club can put into place to meet the minimum requirements of the relevant Child Safe Standard. From these ideas, you will then be able to fill in the 'Action Required' text box area above.

Club Safeguarding Policies and Practices

1. Does your club display your club's commitment to child safeguarding (posters, info sheets)?

Displaying your club's commitment to child safeguarding can be an easy fix. At a minimum, we recommend displaying the AFL Commitment to Child Safety Poster at your club for all to see.

Each link below is specific to an age range. It is up to your club on how you display the info sheets/posters to maximise its reach (for example, displaying the "Say Something" poster in an area for all 5-12-year-olds to see will maximise the poster's reach to this age group and increase the empowerment of young children). Please see below for links to child safe info posters and sheets you may display at your club:

Information for all children

[AFL Commitment to Child Safety](#) – A poster that should be displayed for all children to see.

Information for 5-12-year-olds

[Say Something](#) – An easy-to-understand poster aimed to empower 5-12-year-olds.

Information for 13-18-year-olds

[Safe and Unsafe Behaviours in Footy](#) – An easy-to-understand info sheet on how adults should and should not be behaving towards children. The sheet also includes information on how a child can speak up and to whom to speak. Aimed at 13-18-year-olds.

[How to raise a concern about someone's behaviour](#) – A more in-depth information sheet discussing how to raise something and what will happen next. It is aimed at 13-18-year-olds.

Information for Adults

[Raising safety concerns in Australian Football](#) – A three-page info sheet/poster that details how adults should raise a child's safety concern and how to respond if a child raises a concern with them.

[Expected behaviour of adults in Australian Football](#) – A three-page info sheet/poster that details what is and what is not ok adults' behaviour.

2. Are you providing regular information to members regarding child safety?

A key area of the new Standards is the requirement of organisations to provide ongoing training and education to their volunteers, officials, and staff members. Although this may seem a daunting task, it can be a straightforward process.

Firstly, clubs should ensure Child Safety and Wellbeing is on the agenda at every committee meeting. Some weeks, you may have nothing to discuss regarding Child Safety. However, the topic needs to remain on the agenda for clubs to improve their processes continually.

Secondly, clubs will always be able to deliver ongoing information to club members. Ways this can be achieved include:

- Ensuring new and current club members (players, coaches, parents, officials etc.) watch the relevant [AFL Victoria's Safeguarding Children Webinar Series on a yearly basis](#). Through this link, you will be able to find online seminar recordings for the following groups (recordings will remain relevant for the next 2/3):
 - o Club/Committee Members (Recorded May 3rd, 2022)
 - o Game Day Personnel (i.e., coaches, team managers, umpires etc.) (Recorded May 17th, 2022)
 - o Community Education (i.e., Children, young people, and families) (Recorded May 31st, 2022)
- By utilising third party government services. An example of this can be achieved through the [eSafety Commissioner](#). eSafety offers online safety presentations for sporting organisations and clubs interacting with young people. Their online safety experts provide training for administrators, coaches, and managers. The training is delivered face to face and is free of charge.

3. Has one or more of your committee/members undertaken safeguarding training?

Child Safe organisations must have at least one member of your club complete the Child Protection and Safeguarding Online Course. As of March 2018, all WRFL clubs must have a Child Safety Officer (CSO) in place. The role is intended to give players, clubs, and parents a known point of contact for matters regarding child safety. More information on Child Safety Officer can be found later in this document and in the WRFL Child Safeguarding Handbook.

Please click on the link below for the Child Protection and Safeguarding Online Course. The course should take about 45 minutes to complete, and you are provided with a certificate on completion.

<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/online-courses/child-protection-and-safeguarding-course>

Other online education courses include (more information can be found via the links below or in the WRFL Child Safeguarding Handbook):

- [AFL Victoria's Safeguarding Children Webinar Series](#)
- [Office of the Children's Guardian Child Safe Sport eLearning Modules](#)

4. Is your club welcoming and inclusive of young people (e.g., Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kids, Kids from multicultural backgrounds, kids with disability, LGBTIQ+ kids)?

It takes planning and ongoing work to be welcoming and inclusive of young people from all backgrounds. Even if you believe your club is inclusive of young people from various backgrounds, the information below will provide additional insights on how to create a more inclusive environment at your club.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kids

[Making your club culturally inclusive for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People](#) – This document details ideas and initiatives your club can introduce to ensure best practice in inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

[Community Football Indigenous Round guide 2022](#) – This document details what your club can do to help celebrate the WRFL's Indigenous round.

[Vilification AFL Online Reporting](#) – A poster that can be displayed at your club to inform members on how to make a report relating to allegations of abuse of an offensive or racist nature.

Disability Inclusion

[Built environment checklist](#) – A checklist to determine how accessible your club is to people with a disability and what changes need to be made.

[Making a person with a disability feel welcome](#) - Tips to help make a person with a disability feel welcome.

[What an inclusive club can look like](#) - The journey for a person with a disability.

More information: <https://www.afl.com.au/clubhelp/diversity/disability>

Multicultural

[AFL Multicultural information and toolkit](#) – A tool kit to provide community football clubs with information and solutions to make their club and culturally and linguistically inclusive environment.

Translations

[Translated documents and forms](#) – You will be able to find translated Child Safe posters/forms/other documents. Translated language include Arabic, Chinese Simplified, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Hindi, Dinka.

5. Are your club members/parents aware of the WRFL's child-safe policy and know where to find it?

Two main steps should be taken to ensure members/parents are aware of the WRFL's child-safe policy:

- Upload the WRFL's Child Safe Policy to your website. Alternatively, make the following link available on your website: [WRFL Child Safe Policy](#)
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- Distribute an email to all members detailing where to find the relevant information.

6. Are your club members/parents aware of your code of conduct of participants, parents, volunteers/staff and know where to find it?

Two main steps should be taken to ensure members/parents are aware of your code of conduct of participants, parents, volunteers/staff and know where to find it:

- Upload your code of conduct of participants, parents, volunteers/staff to your website.
- Distribute an email to all members detailing where to find the relevant information.

7. Are your club members/parents aware of your complaint handling and reporting procedure, and incident report form?

Three main steps should be taken to ensure members/parents are aware of your complaint handling and reporting procedure:

- Upload the WRFL's or your club's complaint handling and reporting procedure to your website.
- Upload the WRFL's or your club's complaint incident report form to your website.
Distribute an email to all members detailing where to find the relevant information.
[Child Safety Incident Report Form](#)

8. Does your club have guidelines in place that dictate how adults communicate with children via the online environment?

Clubs need to consider how adults communicate with children via the online environment. The following points are built into the WRFL CSS Code of Conduct:

- Use of electronic communications – where possible email, text messages and social media communications to include parent/guardian or within an open group message.
- Photographs of children and young people – within expectations of AFL privacy policy e.g., photos taken in context of the program, dressed appropriately, etc.

The following resources will be useful to your club when developing guidelines on how adults at your club communicate with children via the online environment.

[Creating a culture of online safety for your organisation](#) – This document provides information regarding how adults should communicate with children, including considering adopting a ‘two-deep’ model where no one-on-one contact via text, social media or other forms of digital communication is acceptable.

[Creating a team culture of online safety](#) – This document provides coaches with useful information on how to set online boundaries and various other tips to improve online safety.

[Vic Sport Guidelines for communication when working with children](#) – This document provides guidelines on how to communicate with children face-to-face and via telephone or other electronic devices.

9. Does your club discuss the safeguarding procedures with all the children and young people within the club and advise them to speak to if they have a concern?

All children and young people at your club should be given the appropriate education and empowerment so, if the time does arise, they are able to make respond appropriately to an incident of inappropriate behaviour. The links below provide resources from that AFL specific to kids (5-12 years) and young people (13-18 years). These resources contain information on what kids and young people should know about child safety. This information should be communicated appropriately with children.

- [Kids \(5-12 years\)](#)
- [Young People \(13-18 years\)](#)

10. Does your club discuss the safeguarding procedures with all the coaches and volunteers within the club?

The best way to discuss the safeguarding procedures with all coaches and volunteers at your club is to provide them with the following documents:

- [Expected behaviours of coaches & volunteers](#) – Information on how coaches and volunteers are to communicate with children.
- [What does abuse in Australian Football look like?](#) – An information sheet detailing what abuse looks like and behaviours that should be alarming.
- [Raising safety concerns in Australian Football](#) – An information sheet detailing how to respond when someone has raised a concern.
- [Communicating with children and young people](#) – A document on how coaches and volunteers are to communicate with children, especially valuable information on how to communicate with children and young people in the online environment.

Club Risk Management

1. Do you feel if an incident or suspicion of child-abuse was to occur at your club it could ensure its obligations were met?

Ensure your child safety officer is aware of the WRFL Child Safety Incident Reporting Form and the Child Safety Reporting Process. Please review the WRFL Child Safeguarding Handbook or contact the WRFL (or other child safeguarding organisations) for further advice.

2. Does your club annually review its compliance against the Child Safe Standards and other legislative obligations related to reporting?

Examples of how your club can review its compliance against the Child Safe Standards and other legislative obligations include:

- Complete the WRFL Child Safeguarding Self-Audit Toolkit annually
- Use incident reporting data to continually improve child safe practices at your club.

3. Has your club screened all employed staff/volunteers in accordance with the WRFL's Child Safe Policy screening requirements?

To meet the WRFL's Child Safe Policy screening requirements, all newly appointed roles must have their WWCC and have read and understand the Child Safety requirements and attended training as required.

4. Have you maintained accurate screening records and stored them securely? Have you stored personal information related to children and young people securely?

Tips on storing information

Carefully manage portable storage devices

Avoid use of portable devices where possible.

Use password protection.

Encrypt data on discs, USB flash drives, SD cards and the like.

Lock portable devices away securely.

Make sure laptops are protected and secure

Use a reliable antivirus program and a personal firewall and keep these regularly updated.

Backup the information on your laptop as often as possible to a secure device or site

Do not store unnecessary confidential information on a laptop's hard drive.

Never leave access numbers, passwords, or security devices in your laptop case.

Ensure hard copies of information is kept secure

Employ a 'clear desk' policy – hard copies containing personal or sensitive details should be filed and locked away securely.

Keep paper files in locked filing cabinets or stored away unless actively working on them.

Use a shredder rather than disposing of unwanted information in normal waste.

5. Do your club members know how to respond to and report suspicious or allegations of child abuse?

You will need to communicate with your members to ensure they know how to respond to and report suspicious or allegations of child abuse. Ways of doing this include:

- Upload the WRFL's CCS Incident Report Form (or your clubs individualised incident report form) to your website.
- Upload the WRFL's Child Safety Reporting Flowchart to your website.
- Distribute an email to all members detailing where to find the relevant information.
- Distribute the following document to members of your club: [Raising safety concerns in Australian Football](#) – A three-page info sheet/poster that details how adults should raise a child safety concern and how to respond if a child raises a concern with them.

Club Leadership and Governance

1. Is child safety a regular discussion topic at your club's committee meetings?

Meeting this step is simple. Make Child Safety an agenda item for each one of your committee meetings. Making Child Safety an agenda item ensures your club is always staying on top of best practice and continually meeting the Standards.

Examples of how Child Safety could be incorporated into your committee meetings include:

- Discussion of one/two/three questions from the Club Safeguarding Self-Audit Toolkit; analyse how your club is meeting each question and determine how you can improve.
- Analyse incident reporting data to determine how your club can improve child safe practices.

2. Does your club have a Member Protection Officer or Child Safety Officer dedicated to ensuring the safety of children and young people?

At a minimum, each club should have one dedicated Child Safety Office. The role is intended to give players, clubs, and parents a known point of contact for matters relating to child safety, and to give clubs a liaison for training and information regarding the issue. Essentially, having a CSO is intended to ensure that if an incident occurs, people know who to turn to, and that person they turn to understands what to do. Your CSO must:

- Complete education modules, such as <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/online-courses/child-protection-and-safeguarding-course>, AFL Victoria's Safeguarding Children Webinar Series or Office of the Children's Guardian Child Safe Sport eLearning Modules (WRFL Child Safeguarding Handbook for more information).
- Ensure your club maintains its commitment to child safety by meeting everything discussed in the WRFL Child Safeguarding Handbook.
- Oversee training and educating your club personnel, players, and parents about child safety.