



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Australian Oztag has an obligation to ensure that the health, safety, and welfare is maintained for all children participating in Oztag related competitions and tournaments. Australian Oztag aims to provide a safe environment for all junior participants and to educate conveners, coaches, referees, and volunteers on child abuse and how any such abuse should be reported.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Provide information to assist associations, referees, and coaches in identifying and dealing with all forms of child abuse.
- Provide education to all associations, referees, and coaches regarding their legal responsibilities under child protection legislation and the working with children check.
- Identify and outline procedures for raising concerns or complaints.

OVERVIEW

Children have the right to be safe from any form of abuse whilst involved in sport. Child protection involves legal as well as moral obligations. In Australian Oztag, it is also governed by policy requirements applicable to all parties involved with Oztag. Every person bound by this policy must always place the safety and welfare of children above all other considerations.

WHAT IS CHILD PROTECTION?

Child protection is about keeping children safe from abuse and protecting them from people who are unsuitable to work with children. Under current child protection legislation, a child is generally defined as a person less than 18 years of age. Child protection is a responsibility of Australian Oztag, and all parties involved with Oztag. It is the responsibility of people whose work involves a direct relationship with children.



WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse relates to children at risk of harm. This could be due to:

- Physical abuse including non-accidental injury and/or harm to a child.
- Sexual abuse/sexual misconduct comprises any sexual act or sexual threat imposed on a child, including suggestive behaviour and inappropriate touching.
- Emotional abuse comprises behaviours that may psychologically harm a child, including severe verbal abuse, and threats of abuse or excessive and unreasonable demands.
- Neglect including situations where a child is harmed by the failure to provide them with the basic physical and emotional necessities of life.

IS CHILD PROTECTION AN ISSUE FOR AUSTRALIAN OZTAG AND SPORT GENERALLY?

Sport is a particularly vulnerable area for potential child abuse because it:

- Involves a large number of people under the age of 18.
- Frequently involves overnight trips.
- Usually involves close relationships between adults and children, where the adults are in positions of trust and can assert authority and power over children.

While our obligation towards protecting children is universal, there are events conducted by Australian Oztag that involve one or more of the above situations. These include but need not be limited to regular season competitions and representative tournaments.



POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Australian Oztag acknowledges that all our parties provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of our juniors. Australian Oztag aims to ensure this continues and to protect the safety and welfare of its junior participants.

Several measures will be used to achieve this such as:

- Australian Oztag requires all those who have contact with children to obtain a “working with children government check” which ensures they do not have any previous convictions for sex and violence crimes against children.
- Prohibiting any form of abuse against children - providing opportunities for our juniors to contribute to and provide feedback on our program development.
- Ensuring our codes of conduct, particularly for roles associated with junior sport, are promoted, enforced, and reviewed.
- Providing procedures for raising concerns or complaints.
- Australian Oztag requires that any child who is abused or anyone who reasonably suspects that a child has been or is being abused by someone with our sport, to report it immediately to the police and to Australian Oztag.
- All allegations of child abuse will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively, and confidentially.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

To provide any junior tournaments or clinics, venue managers and development staff must possess a “working with children check.” A copy of each staff members “working with children check” must be kept as a reference by Australian Oztag.



TAKING OF IMAGES OF CHILDREN

There is a risk that images of children may be used inappropriately or illegally. Australian Ozttag requires that individuals and associations, wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own. They should also make sure the parent/guardian understands how the image/s will be used.

To respect people's privacy, we do not allow camera phones, videos, and cameras to be used inside changing areas, showers, and toilets which we control or are used in connection with our sport.

When using an image of a child, we will not name or identify the child or publish personal information, such as residential address, email address or telephone number, without the consent of the child's parent/guardian.

We will not provide information about a child's hobbies, interests, school, or the like, as this can be used by paedophiles or other persons to "groom" a child. We will only use images of children that are relevant to our sport, and we will ensure that they are suitably clothed in a manner that promotes participation in the sport. We will seek permission from the parents/guardians of the children before using images. We require our member associations and clubs to do likewise.