



AUSTRALIAN PROFESSIONAL SKATERS' ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED CHILD PROTECTION POLICY VERSION 2 OCTOBER 2010

Child Protection & Intervention Policy

**EXECUTIVE
STATEMENT**

The issue of child abuse is a complex problem that has an impact on all areas of society, including participation in sport and recreation activities.

The Wood Royal Commission into the NSW Police Service, led to increased community awareness of the significant number of child sexual assaults and incidents of abuse which occur. It also highlighted the need for the development and implementation of strategies to protect children from abusive situations.

Protecting children from abuse is a responsibility that we must all undertake. Through the implementation of strategies that assist in preventing child abuse from occurring The Australian Professional Skaters Association Incorporated (herein known as APSA) has taken a pro-active role in relation to child protection and intervention. These strategies will help to foster a safe and positive environment for children and young people to participate in physical activities.

In addition, development of Child Protection and Intervention Policy and Guidelines provides APSA with an excellent risk management tool for developing prevention strategies and for the effective management of child abuse issues within sport.

Information contained in this document will create a framework and provide direction for officials, coaches, volunteers, members and parents of children and young people involved in APSA, and affiliated regional and local organisations. It will help deliver a consistent approach to child abuse prevention at all levels of the sport and recreation industry.

Head of Organisation

Date

**P O L I C Y
S T A T E M E N T**

APSA is committed to ensuring that the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children are maintained at all times during their participation in activities run by APSA and its member bodies. APSA aims to promote a safe environment for all children and to assist all officials, coaches, members and volunteers to recognise child abuse and neglect and follow the appropriate notification procedures when reporting alleged abuse.

R A T I O N A L E

The focus of the policy and guidelines is the prevention of child abuse in the sporting environment.

This policy and guidelines promote the care and protection of children participating in APSA approved programs or any situation involving APSA members and provide information and direction for employees, officials, coaches, volunteers and members of APSA.

This policy and guidelines will assist APSA in establishing coordinated strategies for dealing with the problem of child abuse and neglect in a responsible, effective and consistent manner.

O B J E C T I V E S

Through the development of this policy APSA objectives are to:

1. provide information to assist coaches, members and volunteers in dealing with all forms of child abuse
2. provide comprehensive guidelines relating to risk minimisation and reporting/ notification procedures
3. provide direction to all coaches, members and volunteers regarding their legal responsibilities under child protection legislation
4. promote and adopt APSA principles for child protection and intervention amongst volunteers, coaches, members and parents of children participating in the organisation's programs, seminars and lessons conducted by APSA approved coaches.

**S C O P E O F
P O L I C Y**

The Child Protection Intervention Policy of APSA is applicable to all management, staff, members, coaches (paid, voluntary, permanent or casual) of APSA, and its affiliated regional/ local organisations.

**I M P L E M E N T A T I O N
O F L E G I S L A T I O N**

In order to implement the child protection legislation APSA will undertake to:

1. implement strategies and procedures that focus on the best interests of children and meet the requirements of child protection legislation
2. promote a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people participating in activities which come under the umbrella of APSA.
3. increase awareness and emphasise the importance of child protection issues in a sporting environment to all those involved with the activities of APSA. This includes administrators, coaches, members, officials, athletes, parents and their children.

4. ensure that all members of APSA are aware of their responsibilities arising from recent child protection legislation, in particular, the requirement under the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998, to inform their employers if they have been convicted of a serious sex offence.

EXPECTATIONS

Administrators, coaches, officials, members and volunteers often have a high level of contact with children in the sporting environment and play a major part in the successful operation of sporting activities.

Coaches and officials are often seen as role models. They have significant influence on the children they come into contact with and therefore have significant responsibilities.

APSA expects that all administrators, coaches, members and officials whether paid or unpaid, who participate in organised sport under the banner of APSA will commit to implementing risk management strategies developed by APSA for child protection and intervention.

**POLICY
REVIEW**

APSA Child Protection and Intervention Policy and Guidelines will be reviewed annually and updated in line with any legislative changes that have significant impact on the manner in which child protection and intervention issues are to be dealt with.

Signed _____ Date _____
Head of Organisation

Notification Procedures for Allegations of Child Abuse

R A T I O N A L E

APSA acknowledges that issues regarding child abuse and the reporting of allegations of child abuse is highly sensitive, and should be dealt with in a confidential manner.

APSA has developed these notification procedures to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the process and that consistent procedures for reporting are encouraged.

APSA will be proactive in its role to protect children and encourage an open environment that allows employees and members to be aware of their rights and responsibilities within APSA.

C H I L D P R O T E C T I O N O F F I C E R

To deal appropriately with these issues and to ensure that the confidentiality of all parties involved is maintained, one person within APSA will be designated as the child protection officer.

The child protection officer is responsible for reporting any allegations of child abuse that occur in APSA to the local branch of the Department of Community Services (DoCS), and the NSW Police Service.

If the child protection officer is not available then the most senior person within APSA should be notified.

Child Protection Officer:

Name: Monica MacDonald

Position: Child Protection Officer

Mobile: 0433 124 201

Email: monitchka557@yahoo.com.au

W H A T S H O U L D B E R E P O R T E D ?

Some incidents **may seem minor**, however, they may in fact reveal more serious concerns of misconduct or a pattern of behaviour that requires further scrutiny. All people associated with APSA should be aware of the indicators for child abuse and sexual abuse so that they may make an informed decision on what to report.

If you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child participating in any organised activities conducted by APSA is at risk report the matter to the child protection officer.

W R I T T E N N O T I F I C A T I O N

Verbal notification of alleged child abuse must be followed up in writing within 24 hours to the local Department of Community Services using the child protection notification form provided.

INVESTIGATION

If an incident of child abuse occurs in APSA it is not the responsibility of persons within APSA to take it upon themselves to determine whether the allegation is true or false. This responsibility belongs with the NSW Department of Community Service and the Judiciary.

Depending on the nature of the allegations and the extent of the situation, the NSW Department of Community Service will determine the manner in which the matter will be investigated. This may involve the NSW Police Service.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All matters regarding allegations of child abuse are to be treated as confidential. The person designated as the child protection officer is the contact person for any incident involving allegations of child abuse. This is essential for confidentiality. Confidentiality protects all individuals involved:

- the alleged victim
- the alleged offender, and
- the person making the notification.

**COMMISSION
FOR
CHILDREN
AND YOUNG
PEOPLE ACT
1998**

Under the **Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998** APSA is required to:

1. notify the Commission for Children and Young People of the name and other identifying details of any employee against whom relevant disciplinary proceedings have been completed by APSA irrespective of the findings (except where the allegation has been proven to be vexatious, mischievous or false)
2. provide details of child abuse allegations/ convictions against employees to the Commission
3. notify the Commission of any applicants for child-related employment, rejected as a result of risks identified through employment screening processes
4. ensure that records of all information required to be submitted to the Commission for Children and Young People are retained by APSA.

**CHILD
PROTECTION
(PROHIBITED
EMPLOYMENT)
ACT 1998**

Under the **Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998** APSA

1. **will not** commence membership of a person in a child-related position without first requiring them to disclose whether or not they are a 'prohibited person'
2. **will not** commence membership, or continue to membership, in child-related employment, a person that has been identified as a 'prohibited person'.