

## **Child Protection Policy/Child Safe Environment**

Phoenix Netball and its affiliates Cheerio and Oakdale (herein referred to as Phoenix) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people (under 18 years of age) involved with its programs. We support the rights of the child and will act without prejudice to ensure child safe environments at all times. All children should be encouraged to participate fully in their chosen recreational activity and as members of the wider community, we must act to ensure that every environment we establish where children pursue this activity is safe.

The safety and wellbeing of children is a paramount consideration when developing our activities and management practices. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

Netball SA as the state's peak netball body has lodged a Child Safe Environment Compliance Statement that covers all member organisations as part of Phoenix Netball.

### **Duty of Care:**

Phoenix exercises its duty of care to take all reasonable, necessary and appropriate steps to protect children from risk of harm while they are under the care or supervision of its appointed officials and volunteers. Phoenix acknowledges the duty of care expected of all officials and volunteers to all children within its organisation. To ensure its responsibilities are met the following policy is enacted.

### **Code of Conduct:**

Phoenix ensures that codes of conduct for coaches, umpires and officials support those of Australian Sports Commission (Play By the Rules), Netball Australia and NetballSA policies. All coaches, umpires, officials, and players receive a relevant code of conduct at the beginning of each new netball season. All codes of conduct are published on the Phoenix website and all members are provided with relevant copies at the beginning of each season. The codes are expected to be signed and returned to the Secretary.

The core principles of all codes of conduct include:

- Treat everyone with dignity, respect, honesty and fairness;
- Be a positive role model to children and young people in all your conduct with them.
- Follow all endorsed policy and guidelines for the safety and well-being of children including those that are provided by the club from time to time;
- Raise any concerns, problems or issues with the Child Safety Officer of the young person's club of alignment (or delegated officials) as soon as possible;
- Record and act on complaints of abuse.

Officials and volunteers are instructed not to engage in any behaviour that includes (but may not be limited to)

- Unwarranted, unwanted and/or inappropriate touching of a child;
- Bullying or harassment of a child;
- Inappropriate contact or relationships between officials/ volunteers and children within the club;
- Instruction or coaching of an individual child out of sight of other adults or being alone with children

### **Recruitment, supervision & training:**

Phoenix takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages and allows the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children (in official and volunteer capacities). It follows a process of

- Conducting background checks of volunteers who are new to the club;
- Conducting face-to-face interviews;
- Confirming stated credentials and experience;
- Obtaining reference checks regarding suitability to work with children in a recreation environment (for any new volunteers) where appropriate;
- Ensuring processing of criminal history assessments (that includes a police check - Phoenix qualifies for the Voluntary Organization Authorization Number - VOAN)) for all officials, coaches and volunteers who are directly involved with children and before they are appointed.

Since December, 2013 Phoenix Netball and its feeder clubs have complied with regulations regarding all new and existing volunteers working with children 17 and under are assessed.

- Coaches and umpires receive information about Mandatory Notification in training courses run under the auspices of NetballSA. All Phoenix coaches and umpires and feeder clubs are expected to complete their respective first level of training (Foundation level for coaches/AA Level 1 for umpires). Officials and volunteers are encouraged to use the support of the Child Protection Officer from respective aligned club in their response to and reporting of suspicions of child abuse and neglect.

A panel (appointed by the Management Board) that includes someone who has undergone some level of training in Child Protection issues will assess applicants who are new to the club. Where assessing an applicant who is Aboriginal, a member of the selection panel is to be an Aboriginal person(when possible).

Applicants have a right to reply, to lodge an appeal (to the Management Board) against the process and to have the decision independently reviewed.

All personnel involved in the process will maintain the security and confidentiality of the assessment process including personal and criminal history information.

Phoenix fosters a supportive environment that encourages everyone to work towards continuous improvement and accountability. To this end, an induction program (including child safety and well-being issues) and guidance from a mentor is implemented with all new appointments. Officials and volunteers are urged to participate in training provided through feeder clubs, NetballSA and the Department of Recreation & Sport.

### **Child Safety Officer**

A Child Safety Officer is appointed annually by each feeder club and reports directly to their respective clubs. Reports are then made to the Management Board of Phoenix. Using a preventative and proactive approach on child protection issues, the Child Safety Officer provides support for all officials and volunteers of Phoenix through:

- Ensuring training & development opportunities in child protection and safe environments are promoted to all officers and volunteers with the Child Safety Officer involved in induction programs;
- Promotion through communication networks of standards of care and responsibilities of officers and volunteers of the club;
- Ensuring that children and young people are aware of their rights to safe training and playing environments;

- Ensuring officials and volunteers conduct Risk Assessments for all programs and environments involving children;
- Supporting officials and volunteers to develop risk management plans that minimise the risk of harm to children's safety and/or well-being;
- Establishment of reporting strategies that enables children to provide comment and feedback about programs and practices;
- Monitoring incidents and/or reports of breaches of codes of conduct from officials, volunteers, parents and children;

Parents are encouraged to raise any concerns to the Child Safety Officer about the behaviour of officials, volunteers, players or other parents that may be harmful to children, and expect to be listened to and supported.

Phoenix maintains written records of the advice and support provided by the Child Safety Officer to children, parents, officials and volunteers.

#### **Reporting Abuse:**

Where officials or volunteers suspect on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is being abused or neglected, they should report it to the Child Abuse Report Line on 131 478. The paramount consideration is the rights, interests and wellbeing of children and their protection from harm. It is the role of Families SA to assess the notification and determine whether departmental action is warranted.

#### **Bullying & Harassment:**

Bullying occurs when somebody who is more powerful (in stature or position) deliberately and/or repeatedly harms a person or group that is less powerful. Phoenix Codes of Conduct outline standards for addressing bullying and harassment by officials, volunteers, parents and children, within Phoenix.

Racial and sexual harassment and discrimination are unlawful and can have a profound effect on people's involvement in sport.

Racial harassment is any unwanted and/or hurtful behaviour directed at someone because of their race, colour or nationality.

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual attention and can include physical contact that is unnecessary to demonstrating a skill, innuendo and persistent questions about an individual's personal life.

Discriminatory, offensive and violent behaviour is unacceptable and complaints will be followed be promptly investigated and incur an appropriate response. (*see Grievance Procedures*)

Members of Phoenix hold a duty to raise concerns about any behaviour of officials, volunteers, parents or children, which may be harmful to children, without prejudice to their position. Concerns may be raised with the Child Safety Officer or other delegated officers within Phoenix or its feeder clubs.

Grievance procedures are in place, published and followed. All parties in any grievance situation have a right to information about them. The grievance procedures support a process of restorative justice and reconciliation.

#### **Review:**

This policy is provided to all officials, coaches and is available on the club website. Parents and children are advised of its availability through the clubs' Induction Program.

This policy is reviewed annually by the Management Committee of the Phoenix Netball.

Endorsed by the Management Board of Phoenix Netball.

Signed:

Date: