This Participant Protection Policy provides guidance for officials on appropriate and ethical behaviour and refers to the Codes of Conduct endorsed by the Canberra Netball Association.

This policy demonstrates the Club’s approach to preventing inappropriate behaviour.

Good Shepherd Netball Committee
20 October 2012
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PARTICIPANT PROTECTION POLICY

1. GSNC’s Core Objectives

To assist and support participation in and pursuit of netball interests amongst members of the Good Shepherd Community.

To provide coaching, training and skills development to assist in the fulfilment of the above objective to each participant’s maximum potential.

To foster high ideals and a sense of excellence and to encourage teamwork and fair play.

To undertake other things as may be incidental to the attainment of such objectives.

2. Purpose of this policy

This Participant Protection Policy aims to provide an environment where every person involved in our netball club is treated with respect and dignity, and is safe and protected from abuse.

This policy has been endorsed by the GSNC committee. It commenced in October 2012. This policy may be amended from time to time by the Committee. Copies of the policy can be obtained from the Good Shepherd Primary School website under the GSNC link.

3. Who this Policy applies to.

This policy applies to the following, whether they are in a paid or voluntary capacity:

- Individuals sitting on committees and sub-committees;
- Volunteers;
- Coaches, assistant coaches and managers;
- Players;
- Umpires and other officials;
- Members, including life members;
- Parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors to the full extent that is possible.

This policy will continue to apply to a person even after they have stopped their association with GSNC if disciplinary action, relating to an allegation of child abuse against that person, has commenced.

4. Code of Conduct

GSNC requires every individual and organisation bound by this policy to:

- Be ethical, fair and honest in all their dealings;
- Treat all persons with respect and courtesy and have proper regard for their dignity, rights and obligations;
- Always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations;
- Comply with this Participant Protection Policy;
• Operate within the rules and spirit of the sport;
• Comply with all relevant Australian laws (Federal and State), particularly anti-discrimination and child protection laws;
• Be responsible and accountable for their conduct; and
• Abide by the relevant Codes of Conduct provided by Canberra Netball Association.

5. Individual Responsibilities

Individuals bound by this policy are responsible for:
• Making themselves aware of the policy and complying with its requirements;
• Consenting to a national police check if required;
• Co-operating in providing a positive sporting environment.

6. Policy Position Statements

6a. Child Protection Policy

Every person bound by this policy must always place the safety and welfare of children above all other considerations.

GSNC acknowledge that our participants and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of the junior membership. GSNC aims to ensure this continues and to protect the safety and welfare of its junior participants. Several measures will be used to support this such as:

• Prohibiting any form of abuse against children;
• Providing opportunities for our juniors to contribute to and provide feedback on our program development;
• Taking due care with the selection of people whose role requires them to have regular contact with children;
• Ensuring Association codes of conduct are promoted;
• Providing procedures for raising concerns or complaints; and
• Providing information to those involved in our sport on child abuse and child protection.

GSNC requires that any child who is abused or anyone who reasonably suspects that a child has been or is being abused by someone within our sport, to report it immediately to the police or relevant government agency.

All allegations of child abuse will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. A person will not be victimised for reporting an allegation of child abuse and the privacy of all persons concerned will be respected.

6b. Anti-Discrimination Policy

GSNC aims to provide a sport environment where all those involved in its activities are treated with dignity and respect, and without harassment or discrimination.
If any person feels they are being harassed or discriminated against by another person or organisation bound by this policy, please contact a member of the GSNC committee immediately.

7. Complaints Procedures

GSNC aims to provide an accessible confidential and trustworthy procedure for complaints. Any person may report a complaint if they reasonably believe that a person or a sporting organisation has acted in a way contrary to this policy. A complaint should be reported to a member of the GSNC committee.

All complaints will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. The Committee Member will initially handle the complaint, to ascertain whether a quick and simple solution can be found. This may include:

- Reminding those concerned of their obligations under this policy;
- Clarifying whether behaviours or actions are acceptable to those concerned; and
- Identifying whether arrangements can be made to reduce/remove further contact between the parties (such as changing teams).

If the Committee member is unable to satisfactorily finalise the complaint, it will be referred to the President for consideration.

GSNC aims to ensure the complaints procedure has integrity and is free of unfair repercussions or victimisation. If at any point in the complaint process the committee considers that a complainant has KNOWINGLY made an untrue complaint or the complaint is vexatious or malicious, the matter may be referred to the President for appropriate action.

GSNC will also take all necessary steps to make sure that people involved in a complaint are not victimised by anyone coming forward with a complaint or for helping to sort it out.

8. Dictionary

Territory specific definitions and more details on some of the words in this dictionary can be sourced from the relevant Territory child protection commissions or equal opportunity and anti-discrimination commissions.

**Abuse** is a form of harassment and includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and abuse of power. Examples of abusive behaviour include bullying, humiliation, verbal abuse and insults.

**Child** means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

**Child abuse** relates to children at risk of harm (usually by adults, sometimes by other children) and often by those they know and trust. It can take many forms. Children may be harmed by both verbal and physical actions and by people failing to provide them with basic care. Child abuse may include:
• Physical abuse by hurting a child or a child’s development (eg hitting, shaking or other physical harm; giving a child alcohol or drugs; or training that exceeds the child’s development or maturity).
• Sexual abuse by adults or other children where a child is encouraged or forced to watch or engage in sexual activity or where a child is subject to any other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature.
• Emotional abuse by ill-treating a child (eg humiliation, taunting, sarcasm, negative criticism)
• Neglect (eg failing to protect a child from danger or foreseeable risk of harm or injury).

Codes of Conduct means standards of conduct required of certain roles (eg coaches, spectators).

Complaint means a complaint made under this policy.

Complainant means the person making a complaint.

Discrimination means treating or proposing to treat someone less favourably than someone else because of a particular characteristic in similar circumstances in certain areas of public life (this is Direct Discrimination). The law also covers INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION. This is imposing or intending to impose an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice that is the same for everyone, but which has an unequal or disproportionate effect on individuals or groups with particular characteristics. The characteristics covered by discrimination law across Australia are:

• Age;
• Disability;
• Family/carer responsibilities;
• Gender identity/transgender status;
• Homosexuality and sexual orientation;
• Irrelevant medical record;
• Irrelevant criminal record;
• Political belief/activity;
• Pregnancy and breastfeeding;
• Race
• Religious belief/activity;
• Sex or gender;
• Social origin;
• Trade union membership/activity.

Harassment is any type of behaviour that the other person does not want and does not return and that is offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening. The behaviour is unwelcome and of a type that a reasonable person would recognise as being unwelcome and likely to cause the recipient to feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Unlawful harassment includes the above but is neither sexual or targets a person because of their race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation or other characteristic (see characteristic list under discrimination).
It does not matter whether the harassment was intended: the focus is on the impact of the behaviour. The basic rule is if someone else finds it harassing then it could be harassment. Harassment may be a single incident or repeated. It may be explicit, verbal or non-verbal.

Under this policy discrimination and harassment are not permitted when providing sporting goods and services including access to sporting facilities; when providing education and accommodation; the selection or otherwise of any person for competition or a team; the entry or otherwise of any player or other person to any competition and the obtaining or retaining membership of clubs and organisations (including the rights and privileges of membership).

Some exceptions to state and federal anti-discrimination law apply. Examples include:

- Holding a competitive sporting activity for females only who are 12 years of age or over where strength, stamina or physique is relevant or
- Nor selecting a participant if the person’s disability means he or she is not reasonably capable of performing the actions reasonably required for that sporting activity.

Requesting, assisting, instructing, inducing or encouraging another person to engage in discrimination or harassment may also be against the law.

It is also against the law to victimise a person who is involved in making a complaint of discrimination or harassment.

Public acts of racial hatred which are reasonably likely in the circumstances to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate are also prohibited. This applies to spectators, participants or any other person who engages in such an act in public.

**Junior** means a person under the age of 18 years who is participating in an activity of the GSNC.

**Participant** means a financially registered participant of the Good Shepherd Netball Club.

**Participant protection** describes the practices and procedures that protect participants – both individual participants such as players, coaches and officials, and the participating organisations such as clubs, state associations, other affiliated associations and the national body. Participant Protection involves:

- Protecting those that are involved in sport activities from harassment, abuse, discrimination and other forms of inappropriate behaviour;
- Adopting appropriate measures to ensure the right people are involved in an organisation, particularly in relation to those involved with juniors; and
- Providing education.

**Committee** means any and all persons listed as acting on the Good Shepherd Netball Club Committee in an official capacity.

**Natural justice** incorporates the following principles:
- A person who is the subject of a complaint must be fully informed of the allegations against them.
- A person who is the subject of a complaint must be given full opportunity to respond to the allegations and raise any matters in their own defence.
- All parties need to be heard and all relevant submissions considered.
- Irrelevant matters should not be taken into account.
- No person may judge their own case.
- The decision maker/s must be unbiased, fair and just.
- The penalties imposed must no outweigh the ‘crime’.

**Police check** means the national criminal history record check conducted as a prudent pre-employment or pre-engagement background check on a person. Part exclusion police checks, which include irrelevant offences, are commonly used in schools and sporting organisations.

**Policy** and **this policy** means the Participant Protection Policy.

**Positive sporting environment** means one that is free from discrimination, harassment and abuse.

**Sexual harassment** means unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take many forms and may include unwanted physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, display of pornographic or offensive material or other behaviour that creates a sexually hostile environment.

Sexual harassment is not behaviour based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect. If the interaction is between consenting adults, it is not sexual harassment.

**Sexual offence** means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency.

**Victimisation** means subjecting a person or threatening to subject a person to any detriment or unfair treatment because that person has or intends to pursue their rights to make a complaint under government legislation (eg anti-discrimination) or under this policy, or for supporting another person to make a complaint.

**Young people/person** means people in the 13-18 year age group.