

## Purpose

AFL SportsReady is committed to creating and maintaining environments where children and young people are safe, respected, valued and heard.

This Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all AFL SportsReady team members when interacting with, working with or making decisions that affect children and young people.

## Scope

This Code applies to all AFL SportsReady workers, including:

- Board members
- Employees
- Apprentices and trainees
- Contractors
- Consultants
- Volunteers
- Service providers
- Work experience students

For the purpose of this Code, all of the above are referred to as **team members**.

## Guiding Principles

All team members must:

- Act in the best interests of children and young people at all times.
- Promote the safety, wellbeing, participation and empowerment of children and young people.
- Treat children and young people with dignity, fairness and respect.
- Listen to and value the views of children and young people.
- Support inclusive and culturally safe environments.
- Comply with AFL SportsReady's Child Safety Policy and associated procedures.
- Contribute to a culture where concerns are raised and acted upon appropriately.

## Expected Standards of Behaviour

### **Team members must:**

- Treat children and young people with respect, dignity and courtesy.
- Act as positive role models.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

- Encourage children and young people to participate and express their views.
- Support the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.
- Support children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Support the inclusion and participation of children and young people with disability.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from harm;
- respond appropriately when concerns are raised.
- Report concerns, disclosures, risks or incidents relating to child safety as soon as practicable.
- Comply with all child safety training, policies and procedures.

### **Team members must not:**

- Engage in abusive, bullying, intimidating, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour.
- Engage in unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person.
- Develop relationships with children or young people that could be perceived as Favouritism, grooming or otherwise inappropriate.
- Engage in grooming behaviour or conduct that could reasonably be perceived as grooming.
- Engage in contact with children or young people outside professional responsibilities without appropriate authorisation.
- Engage in inappropriate electronic communications with children or young people.
- Share personal contact details with children or young people unless authorised.
- Access, display or distribute inappropriate material in environments where children are present.
- Take, share or publish images of children or young people without appropriate consent.
- Supply alcohol, illicit substances or prohibited items to children or young people.
- Expose children or young people to inappropriate language, material or discussions.
- Place a child or young person in a situation that presents an avoidable risk to their safety or wellbeing.
- Ignore or fail to report concerns relating to child safety.

### **Digital Communication and Online Learning**

Team members must:

- Use only approved AFL SportsReady communication and learning platforms when communicating with children and young people.
- Maintain professional boundaries in all online interactions.
- Ensure electronic communications are appropriate, respectful and related to AFL SportsReady services.

- Follow organisational requirements regarding online learning, social media and digital communication.
- Report concerns relating to online safety, cyberbullying, grooming or inappropriate online behaviour.

Team members must not:

- Communicate with children or young people through personal social media accounts.
- Share personal contact information unless authorised.
- Engage in private or secretive online communications with children or young people.
- Share inappropriate content, images or material

### **One-to-One Interactions**

Where reasonably practicable, team members should avoid being alone with a child or young person and ensure interactions occur in open, observable or otherwise authorised environments.

One-to-one meetings with children and young people should occur in observable environments or through approved communication platforms where reasonable. Where this is not possible, appropriate safeguards and records should be maintained.

### **Reporting Concerns**

All team members have a responsibility to report child safety concerns, disclosures, risks, incidents or suspected breaches of this Code.

Concerns should be reported immediately to the Child Safety Officer, or where appropriate, a Manager, Educator, Employment Coach or other authorised AFL SportsReady representative.

All team members must immediately report:

- suspected abuse or neglect;
- disclosures made by a child or young person;
- concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing;
- suspected breaches of this Code; and
- behaviour that may place a child or young person at risk of harm.

Reports must be made in accordance with AFL SportsReady's Child Safety Reporting Guide.

Where a child is at immediate risk of harm, emergency services must be contacted immediately on 000.

## Breaches of this Code

Failure to comply with this Code may result in disciplinary action, including:

- counselling;
- formal warnings;
- removal from duties involving children;
- termination of employment or engagement; and/or
- failure to comply with mandatory reporting obligations may also result in criminal penalties under relevant legislation.

## Code of Conduct Review Details

AFL SportsReady will review this Code annually to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

| <b>Version</b> | <b>Effective</b> | <b>Review Approved By</b>                            | <b>Next Review</b> |
|----------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.0            | April 2026       | AFL SportsReady Audit, Risk and Governance Committee | April 2027         |
| 1.2            | October 2026     | AFL SportsReady Chief Executive Officer              | October 2027       |