



Child Safe Standards

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS GUIDE

Date created:	1 August 2023												
Audience:	Parents and Guardians of Members and Participants who are under the age of 18 years.												
Version:	2021:2												
Purpose of Document:	<p>(a) To summarise and simplify what parents and guardians need to know about all of our responsibilities to keep children and young people in [SPORT] safe; and</p> <p>(b) To ensure that parents and guardians have oversight of the information that [INSERT ORGANISATION] distributes to its members under the age of 18 years.</p>												
Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and understand. • Ask and ensure that Parents and Guardians acknowledge that they have read and understand this guide • Encourage others to read and understand 												
Review:	1 Year Later than date if not prior												
Aikman Club Contact:	secretary@aikman.club												
Contents:	<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th>[Document(s)]</th> <th>Page</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Child Safe Parents and Guardians Guide</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OTHERS</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Guide for Teens</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Child Safe User Guide</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summary of the Code of Conduct for dealing with Children & Young People)</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	[Document(s)]	Page	Child Safe Parents and Guardians Guide	3	OTHERS		Guide for Teens		Child Safe User Guide		Summary of the Code of Conduct for dealing with Children & Young People)	
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Other relevant resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eSafety Guide • Guidance to deal with Child Safe Concerns • Tips and Scripts for Complaint Management • Form – Confidential Record of Child Safe Concern] 												



Aikman Club

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The [Child Safe Framework or equivalent] sets out the responsibilities that all [Clubs and Participants within your organisation/sport] (including parents) have to keep our kids safe. It consists of:

- **Aikman Club’s Commitment Statement for Safeguarding Children and Young People (or equivalent)];**
- **Aikman Club’s Policy for Safeguarding Children & Young People (or equivalent)];** and
- **Aikman Club’s Code of Conduct for dealing with Children & Young People (or equivalent)].**

WHY YOUR CHILDREN’S SAFETY IS OUR PRIORITY:

1. We love [sport/activities]. We also love your kids playing [sport/activities] with us and want them to keep participating. Yet we realise that they have to FEEL safe to enjoy [sport] and want to keep coming back.
2. All kids have a right to feel safe, be involved and have a voice in decisions that affect them*.
3. Society has changed, and with it, higher standards of behaviour are now expected – of all of us. Sometimes, even though we have good intentions, others’ *perception* of behaviour is different. So we want to help you to understand how we will work with you to protect your children.

WHAT WE’RE TRYING TO DO:

We’re here to help. Victoria has legislative requirements and mandatory standards in place about child safety. We can’t ignore those. But we want to make it as simple as possible for you, your kids and all of our [clubs/organisations] volunteers, coaches and members to keep children safe.

We’ve developed simple resources for you to explain how we keep children and young people safe in our [organisation/sport]. This Guide also includes links to our other child safe resources that we hope are helpful for you to summarise and simplify the key commitments, messages and boundaries that we adhere to and practice in [organisation/sport] when they are part of our community.

SOME CHILD SAFETY GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS:

You know your children best. Also, our schools now often teach their students about safety, boundaries with adults and that it’s OK to speak up if they don’t feel comfortable or safe. You can also help us to reinforce the key messages we have for children about child safety in [organisation/sport], just as in life.

The **three key messages** we have in our Child Safe “Teens Guide” are:



1. Aikman Club rowing should be fun, safe and enjoyable.
2. You should never feel uncomfortable around others at the Aikman Club, particularly adults.
3. If you don't feel safe or comfortable, it's OK to speak up. We want you to **tell an adult that you trust** – whether that's your Mum or Dad, guardian, coach or another member of your club or family.

We know that children are more likely to speak up if they **feel valued** and are **listened to** in an **authentic** and **genuine** way. So please help us to **keep the conversations open with your kids** about how they are feeling

SOME CONVERSATION TIPS TO TALK ABOUT SAFETY WITH YOUR CHILDREN:

It's not always comfortable talking to kids about how they are feeling in our [sport/activity] community or other environments. The delivery of conversations is just as important as the message or content itself. You're more likely to engage with children about tricky topics if the conversation is calm, non-judgmental and open. That is, you're listening carefully to them and open to hearing more – showing empathy and letting them know that they're doing the right thing by talking.

To open up a conversation with your child about safety in rowing, first of all, choose the right time. Sometimes, you may get more information in casual interactions, such as when driving in the car or going for a walk together. You could try using an example that you have heard of with another kid and whether they had seen or heard anything similar. For example, *“another parent at the club told me that they were worried about how the coach is talking to their child. Have you seen or heard anything similar?”*.

IF YOU NEED HELP:

If ever your child tells you that they are not happy, comfortable or safe in our Club, **please tell an appropriate senior person in the Aikman Club such as your club's Child Safety Officer or a trusted Club or Sport official**. Then we'll make sure that any issue raised is dealt with appropriately and in line with our Child Safe Framework (or equivalent)].

If you reasonably believe[^] any child is in immediate danger of a significant nature, please call 000 to speak with police. You can also contact services such as Parent Helpline, NAPCAN, Lifeline, Kids Helpline and the Raising Children Network.

*Australian Government National Child Office for Child Safety Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people – A Reference Guide, 2019.

Commission for Children and Young People – Empowerment and Participation of Children Tip Sheet.

[^] A **reasonable belief** is one that a reasonable person in the same position would have formed on the same grounds.



Aikman Club

Child Safe Standards

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS GUIDE

THREE IMPORTANT MESSAGES

The **three key messages** to always keep in mind are:

4. Rowing should be fun, safe and enjoyable.
5. You should never feel uncomfortable around others in rowing, particularly adults.
6. If you don't feel safe or comfortable, **it's OK to speak up**. We want you to **tell an adult that you trust** – whether that's your Mum or Dad, guardian, coach, team manager, Club Child Safety Officer or another member of your rowing club or family.

YOUR RIGHTS

We believe that all kids involved in our sport should:

- Feel comfortable;
- Feel safe;
- Have a right to contact your parents/guardians or others if you feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed at any time when you are involved in rowing;
- Be provided with clear directions and given the chance to positively change your behaviour if rowing staff, coaches, volunteers or officials believe that you have broken any rules or policies or you have misbehaved;
- NOT be subject to disciplinary action involving verbal or physical punishment, or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered cruel, frightening, humiliating or like you are being put down; and
- Contribute suggestions or feedback about rowing.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU IN ROWING

Rowing now has a **Child Protection Commitment Statement** that aims to make sure you are protected from harm. When involved in rowing, we want it to be enjoyable for everyone. So, we'll try to make sure that activities are suitable for your age and development and are led by qualified people.



Rowing commits to:

- Doing our best to make sure that you are protected from harm;
- Supervising your involvement in rowing in Victoria;
- Obtaining parent/guardian permission in writing before we can:
 - take you on an excursion;
 - arrange overnight stays or camps; and/or
 - provide transport to another location.
- Ensuring that **employee/coach/volunteer/official-to-teens ratios are maintained**. (Note - please check with us if you are unsure what is meant by “ratios”);
- Trying to make sure that **you are not alone** with staff, coaches, volunteers or officials where they can't be seen by other adults;
- Trying to make sure that rowing **staff, coaches, volunteers and/or officials stay within their role**. This means that they cannot be employed for looking after you or visiting you at your home unless with the permission of your Parent/Guardian. They are not allowed to friend you on Facebook, take photos or footage of you for Instagram, YouTube, Snap Chat or other forms of social media unless they are doing this through official club communication channels with the consent of your parent/guardian.
- **Communication between you and coaches, officials and volunteers** in our sport must be regarding your involvement in rowing unless your Parent/Guardian has given their permission for you to have contact with them at a particular time;
- **Guiding teens fairly, respectfully and appropriate to their age and background;**
- **Reporting and responding to any incidents** of abuse or neglect towards teens involved in rowing.
- Where and when possible, our rowing **staff, volunteers and officials wearing a uniform and/or having an appropriate name badge visible** on when on duty.

What to do if you have concerns:

- If at any stage you feel uncomfortable, unsafe or worried, you should let your parent/guardian or a trusted adult in [sport/activity] know what has happened – they will want to support you.
- All you need to do is tell someone about what happened and they will do their best to make sure that you feel safe and protected from harm.

WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEENS IN [SPORT/ACTIVITY]

When you are involved in rowing, you also have some responsibilities. These include:



- Letting a member/parent/guardian know if you are unhappy or you don't feel safe;
- Treating other participants and adults with respect;
- Following the rules when involved in rowing;
- Remembering that there are others involved in rowing. You are certainly free to choose your own friends. However, don't stop other teens or younger kids from enjoying and participating in rowing; and
- Listening to others and respecting their opinions.