



# **HAWKE'S BAY POVERTY BAY SWIMMING**

## **MEMBER PROTECTION POLICY**

Hawke's Bay Poverty Bay Swimming is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practices and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation while participating in our activities.

For the purpose of this policy and associated procedures a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years.

This policy is based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, diversity, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters, which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- Our organisation will work in partnership together with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

### **Policy Objectives:**

The aim of this policy is to promote good practice through:

- Promoting the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in swimming activities safely.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children.
- Promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the well being of children and protect them from abuse.
- Recruiting, training, supporting and supervising staff, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- Requiring staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- Responding to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with the Policy and procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this Policy and procedures.



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### **Procedures:**

#### **Screening**

As part of our duty of care, we must ensure that suitable and appropriate employees and volunteers (including parents) are engaged to work with children. When recruiting people to engage with children we will ensure that there is a robust recruitment process including screening.

Clubs are to screen (through police vetting process) team managers for teams staying on away trips such as for meets and camps, and where there is additional contact outside of the immediate poolside environment, when the swimmers are managed from a club level.

Clubs are strongly encouraged to screen regular poolside team managers, and those that have considerable contact with the children/swimmers.

For regional team trips and camps the responsibility for screening managers will sit with the region.

Coaches are screened as part of their membership to NZSCAT.

#### **Appointing a Child Protection Officer**

Clubs must appoint a Child Protection Officer to manage child protection issues. This person will:

- Ensure that child protection procedures are understood and adhered to.
- Establish and maintain complaints procedure.
- Act as the main contact for child protection matters.
- Report to the Hawke's Bay Poverty Bay Board as required.
- Keep up-to-date with developments in child protection legislation.
- Maintain confidential records of reported cases and any action taken.

The region shall appoint a Child Protection Officer who will be the direct contact for members and clubs on any Child Protection issues.

#### **Good Practice Protocols**

The protocols provide guidance to those working with children by outlining good practice and establishing boundaries in a range of situations.

- Applying a child-centred approach where all children are treated equally and with dignity.
  - Activities should be appropriate for the age and development of the children in your care.
  - Ensure feedback to children is about their performance and not of a personal nature.
  - Use positive and age-appropriate language when talking to children and in their presence.



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- Creating a safe and open environment.
  - Ensure that all physical contact with children is relevant and appropriate to the activity.
  - Seek permission to touch when doing the above.
  - Do not engage in any intimate, over familiar or sexual relationships with people under the age of 18 years.
  - Ensure that any filming or photography of children is appropriate, and that only suitable images and/or video is shared to safeguard and protect young persons, in line with the objectives of this policy.
  - Request parental consent before transporting young people in a vehicle (Ensure vehicle is insured and has a current WOF).
  - Ensure you have parental consent to administer first aid if required.
  - Do not drink alcohol with children or offer alcohol to children under any circumstances.
  - Do not engage in communication on a one to one basis through social media or email other than relevant coach/trainee feedback or administration.
  - Do not allow parents, coaches, other children, or spectators to engage in any type of bullying behaviour (this includes cyber bullying).
  - Do not engage in any bullying activity.
- Avoiding situations where you are alone with a child.
  - Avoid private or unobserved situations, including being alone with a child in the changing rooms.
  - Avoid entering changing rooms. If you must enter, knock and announce yourself and try to have at least one other adult with you.
  - Avoid driving a child unaccompanied.
  - Do not invite or encourage children to your home.

### **Code of Conduct/Behaviour**

A Code of Conduct sets out an organisation's expectation of its swimmers, coaches, committees, volunteers and officials and supporters.

Complaint and internal discipline procedures for breaches of code should be developed and widely distributed and promoted.



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### **Dealing with Allegations, Responding to Concerns**

In accordance with members' responsibility to act on any serious concerns, the following should be brought to the attention of the Child Protection Officer (on behalf of Hawke's Bay Poverty Bay

Swimming)

- Any instance where policy is breached, or good practice guidelines are not followed.
- Any disclosure by a child that abuse or harm is occurring.
- Any suspicions or concerns about a child being subject to abuse.

### **Where Concerns about Poor Practice are Reported**

Poor practice involves actions that are contrary to the good practice guidelines provided by our organisation and increase the risk of harm to children.

- Initial concerns should be discussed with the Child Protection Officer (in the absence of a CPO the Board of Hawke's Bay Poverty Bay Swimming should be notified).
- Consider the allegation and where there is a legitimate concern provide a written notice to the individual(s) involved.
- If the poor practice is continued or repeated following a written notice then enact disciplinary procedures. This may include expulsion from Hawke's Bay Poverty Bay Swimming.

### **Where Abuse is Suspected or Reported**

The welfare and interests of the child or young person are the first and paramount considerations.

- Ensure the child is safe from immediate harm.
- Consult immediately with nominated CPO/person in charge.
- As soon as possible, record accurately and appropriately the information received.
- Records should be factual (not opinion or here-say) and concise and include:
  - The nature of the allegation.
  - Who noticed/disclosed the abuse, and their relationship to the child.
  - Details of any witnesses.
  - Signs and symptoms noted (including behavioural change).
  - Any particular incidents with dates, times and places (if possible).
  - Any action taken.
- Consult with others as necessary – do not work alone.
- Avoid questioning the child beyond what has already been disclosed.
- Do not question or counsel the alleged offender.
- Do not investigate/presume expertise unless very experienced and qualified to do so.
- Notify Child Youth and Family or the Police, if required or if in doubt.