



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

To ensure ALL Argos Gymsport staff understand their responsibility to safeguard the well-being of all children in our programmes by protecting them from physical, sexual, verbal or emotional harm and from neglect and bullying. To ensure the club meets its obligation of providing safe programmes and positive experiences and opportunities for children to the highest possible standard of care.

GUIDELINES

- A child is defined as a person under the age of 18.
- Every child's well-being and safety is our paramount consideration.
- Create a positive environment by: working in the open and avoiding unobserved situations, having a minimum of two staff or adults present at all times, treating all children equally and with respect, giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism and by being a good role model.
- **One-on-one Interactions:** A coach should not be alone with an athlete in a private setting or in any place that is inappropriate to a professional relationship.
- **Travel:** when travelling, adults should not be alone with an athlete. For night travel, athletes should be assigned to age appropriate, same sex teammates.
- **Do not allow unrelated adults to share a room or be alone with a child.**
- All children have a right to be protected from abuse, regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity. The needs of special needs children and any other children who may be particularly vulnerable, must be especially considered. The Management and staff will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in our programme activities, through adherence to these Child Protection guidelines.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff (paid/voluntary) working in programmes have a responsibility to report concerns to the programme manager or an appropriate management person e.g. concerns may include a child talking about an incidence of abuse outside of the club, if a child is accidentally hurt in any way by a coach or programme facilitator, if you are aware of another staff member acting inappropriately, if any child is not respecting another child etc. This includes physical bullying, hazing, verbal and emotional harassment. Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.
- In cases relating to disclosure of sensitive information the information will be treated confidentially and dealt with by the management committee. The committee will decide on the appropriate action to be taken which may involve such outside agencies as Oranga Tamariki or the police. These decisions will be made on a case by case basis and a special meeting will be called if necessary.
- The management acknowledges that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Eg: applications may require self-disclosure of criminal record, police vetting, reference checks etc (Refer Employment Procedure).
- All members of staff should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour when working with children in order to protect children from abuse and themselves from false allegations.
- Coaches and programme facilitators are to be mindful of how and where they touch gymnasts in cases where physical contact is necessary such as assisting with stretching, assisting on pieces

of apparatus and helping injured children. Inappropriate areas should be avoided such as the breasts, groin and buttock regions.

- In the case of a private training session, it may be that only one staff member is present. This needs to be brought to the attention of the parent/caregiver concerned and it will be their decision whether to remain within the gym during the session or not.
- Children attending any gym programme or training are not the responsibility of the club once that session is finished. It is expected that children will wait inside the club facilities until they are collected by a parent or caregiver. It is the parent/caregiver's responsibility to ensure their contact details are current in case of emergency (See evacuation procedure.)
- In the case of outside visiting groups, the responsibility of the members of that group lies with the person in charge of that group not with ARGOS gymnastic club.
- ARGOS Gymnastics club does not permit the unauthorised use of any photographic media or posting of such on to the Internet. (See Photographic Media Policy.)
- Any information given to the club regarding child protection issues will be stored in a secure and confidential place and there will be limited access to this by the management and parties such as CYFS or the police.
- Any concerns from non-staff personnel should be dealt with according to the club's Complaints procedure.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT A CHILD IS AT RISK

The following flowchart provides an illustration of the steps taken if you observe signs and indicators of abuse as outlined in the guidelines:

STEP 1: LISTEN

- Listen carefully to what the child is saying **DO NOT** interview the child or ask too many questions, ask the very basics i.e. Who/when?
- Once you have ascertained the basics **DO NOT** question them further. Document what the child as said, include time, date and who was present so Argos Gymsport can pass this information to authorities as soon as possible.
- Report your concern to the Argos Gymsport Head Coach or Centre Manager.



STEP 2: HOW TO REPORT YOUR CONCERN

- If the Argos Gymsport Head Coach or Centre Manager think a person is in immediate danger, they will call the Police (111) or, they will advise the Ministry of Vulnerable Children (Oranga Tamariki) on 0508 FAMILY (0505 326 459) or Police promptly when a disclosure is made.





STEP 3: POLICE

The Police have a dedicated team of investigators who focus on Child Protection.

- Deciding when and who will inform the parent(s) and/or caregiver will be determined by Oranga Tamariki and Police in consultation with the Centre Manager and Committee. Report early so there is time to consider what's best for the child.
 - Police and Oranga Tamariki will arrange interviews of the children.
- DO NOT conduct an investigation of your own before making a report of concern.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with all other ARGOS Gymsport policies including Health & Safety, Stretching Policy, Head Injury Policy, Photographic Media Policy, Behaviour Policy and the Evacuation Procedure.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sheena", is written above a horizontal line.

Club President

17 December 2020

Date

Read & Understood

Staff Member

Date