

North Box Hill Tennis Club - Child Safety Code of Conduct

This Child Safety Code of Conduct was approved by the Management Committee of the NBHTC (NBHTC) on 15th September 2022. It demonstrates the strong commitment of the Management Committee and the NBHTC Community to child safety and wellbeing, and how the NBHTC keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

Commitment to child safety

All children who come to the NBHTC have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in its care will always be its priority. The NBHTC has a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. The NBHTC aims to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun while enjoying playing tennis.

Purpose

This Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines how the NBHTC prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps it will take to do this.

Scope

This Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all members of the Management Committee, club members, coaches, parents or guardians, children and all other individuals connected with the NBHTC. This Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all activities conducted at the NBHTC.

Definitions

NBHTC means the NBHTC

NBHTC Community means

- all members of the NBHTC and their guests invited to use the club's facilities
- providers of coaching services (including their employees) engaged by the NBHTC
- children who are coached by the providers of coaching services engaged by the NBHTC

Management Committee means the committee elected by the members of the NBHTC

Child abuse means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M (1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

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

Concerns and complaints

A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to the NBHTC related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- services or dealings with individuals by any person (or his/her representative) engaged by the club for the purpose of providing tennis coaching
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by any individual associated with the NBHTC
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
- the conduct of a child or young person at the NBHTC
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

Role of the Management Committee

The Management Committee has the role of making sure the NBHTC prioritises children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.

The Management Committee will champion and model a child safe culture at the NBHTC. It will encourage anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern. The Management Committee will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.

Everyone at the NBHTC has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. The Management Committee shall conduct risk assessments and take action to manage risks in accordance with this Child Safety Code of Conduct. It will also ensure that appropriate child safety training, where required, is identified and completed.

The Management Committee will conduct an annual review of how effectively the NBHTC is delivering child safety and wellbeing. The input of everyone involved with the NBHTC will be sought as part of this review.

Children's empowerment and participation

The Management Committee wants children associated with the NBHTC to develop new friends and encourages children to be supportive of each other. It will not tolerate bullying or abusive behaviour between children and will act if this occurs.

The Management Committee respects the rights of children and will provide them with information about their rights including the right to be safe at the NBHTC. It will actively seek to understand what makes children feel safe in our club. It will regularly communicate with children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

The NBHTC values the voices of children and will act on safety concerns raised by children, or their families.

The NBHTC supports children's participation in the following ways:

- Regular discussions with children, including child-led conversations on what makes them feel safe and unsafe.
- A suggestion box for children that is regularly emptied with suggestions assessed and acted on where appropriate. Children are provided with feedback on their suggestions.
- Consultation with children about any proposed significant changes to the physical environment, policies, procedures, programs or staffing. Children's views are collected by the Management Committee and considered in the decision-making process.
- Information provided to children and families about the NBHTC's operations and programs are made suitable for different age groups and diversity of the children.

Families and communities

The Management Committee recognises the important role of families and will involve parents, guardians and carers when making significant decisions about their child. Parents, guardians, carers and families are welcome to provide feedback at any time through the contact email address and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with the Management Committee.

The Management Committee will provide information to parents, guardians, carers and families about the club's child safe policies and practices including through:

- publishing this Child Safety Code of Conduct on the NBHTC website
- including information about its child safety approach, details of the Management Committee (and structure) on the NBHTC website and "Information to New Members" provided to new members
- ensuring this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is provided to all parents, guardians or carers of children who are coached by a provider of coaching services and who are not members of the NBHTC
- including articles and information on child safety and wellbeing, and reminders about our policies and procedures, in the NBHTC newsletter.

Creating culturally safe environments for all Aboriginal children and their families

The NBHTC is committed to creating environments where Aboriginal culture is celebrated and Aboriginal children, families and community members are welcomed and included. Strategies to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal children include:

- consulting with families and members of the Aboriginal community to identify opportunities to promote Aboriginal culture and practices in the NBHTC programs, where appropriate
- seeking feedback from Aboriginal children, families and communities on their experience at the NBHTC, particularly how safe they feel expressing their identity, including their culture.

Valuing diversity

The NBHTC values diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, the NBHTC:

- welcomes and supports participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families
- offers students and families through our enrolment forms the opportunity to provide information about themselves, including any specific needs to participate fully in our programs
- has zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and act when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- strives to reflect the diversity of our community through representation on our Management Committee
- has a physical and online environment that actively celebrates diversity, where appropriate
- commits to ensuring the NBHTC facilities and online activities promote inclusion of children of all abilities.

Recruiting staff and volunteers

The NBHTC puts child safety and wellbeing at the centre of the engagement of any person(s) who will have dealings with children at the NBHTC. The Management Committee shall appoint persons who are appropriate to engage with children. Members of the Management Committee must also be screened to ensure they are appropriate to engage with children.

The Management Committee shall require a Working with Children Check, Police Checks and referee checks for all persons who have a role with children or have access to children's personal information. It shall require persons engaged by the club staff to have appropriate qualifications for their roles and shall check to make sure these qualifications are valid. Members of the Management Committee must hold a valid Working with Children Check.

Supporting staff and volunteers

The NBHTC is committed to ensuring that all persons associated with the club receive training (where appropriate) to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children. The NBHTC shall assist such persons to incorporate child safety considerations into decisions and to promote a safe environment where children are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

Issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with this Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Complaints and reporting

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

The NBHTC has a complaint handling policy that includes about how a complaint or child safety concern will be responded to. An easy-to-understand complaints information sheet will be provided to children, families, and members to know about the complaint process and the supports available to those making a complaint and those involved in the complaint process.

If a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, then the Management Committee must report it in accordance with the complaint handling policy. The Management Committee is required to prioritise children's safety in any response and to report all potentially criminal conduct to Victoria Police. Under the complaint handling and disciplinary policies, members of the NBHTC Community be subject to actions to support child safety including:

- being stood down during an investigation or terminated following an investigation
- having their duties altered so they do not engage with children at the NBHTC
- not allowing unsupervised contact with children at the NBHTC
- removing their access to the NBHTC IT system and facilities.

Complaints can be emailed to complaints@kidshavefun.org.au or addressed to the President of the NBHTC, Dallas Newton.

Phone: 0401 990 013

Email: dallas_newton@hotmail.com

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

Record keeping

The NBHTC is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

All child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and "near misses" will be recorded in the incident reporting system.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

The NBHTC will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely and kept by The NBHTC for at least 45 years.

Information sharing

The NBHTC may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. The NBHTC will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety. The NBHTC may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety.

Risk management

The NBHTC recognises the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments operated by the NBHTC.

The Management Committee will conduct regular risk assessments and have a risk management plan to address the risk of child abuse and harm at the NBHTC. It will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the benefits of participating at the NBHTC. The Management Committee is responsible for approving the risk management plan.

Any contractors or other providers of services will always be supervised by a member the Management Committee while working at the NBHTC to ensure child safety, where appropriate.

Compliance with this Child Safety Code of Conduct

All members of the NBHTC Community shall comply with this Child Safety Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including the immediate termination of a person's involvement with the NBHTC.

All third-party contractors will be required to abide by the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and where they are engaging with children will have to sign an agreement to comply with the Child Safety Code of Conduct, prior to delivering any services.

The NBHTC will enforce this Child Safety Code of Conduct. Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of membership or engagement or other corrective action.

Review

The Management Committee will review this Child Safety Code of Conduct (and other relevant child safe practices and policies) at least every two years. The Management Committee will also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or "near miss". Findings from reviews will be reported to the members and to inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices.