



# Redlands Touch Association Child & Youth Risk Management Strategy

## Purpose

This policy aims to ensure that Redlands Touch is committed to maintaining the health and wellbeing of children and young people who participate in our sport. This is in all aspects of our business from events through to training and general participation. This policy also ensures that everyone involved in our association is aware of his or her responsibilities and obligations in relation to child and youth risk management.

## Authorisation

RTA President  
01/11/2014  
Redlands Touch Association Inc

Policy number	003_2014	Effective on:	01/11/14
Responsible person	President	Accepted by Board on	23/10/2014
Version	001_2014	Scheduled review date	01/10/15

## Related Documents

- Code of Ethics
- Constitution
- By-Laws
- Member Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct/Ethics.



# Child & Youth Risk Management Strategy

## Part 1: Commitment

### Statement of Commitment

Redlands Touch is committed to maintaining the health and wellbeing of children and young people who participate in our sport. This is in all aspects of our business from events through to training. They are the future of our sport and will be provided with safe and supportive environments in which to participate in touch football through effective policy development and implementation by qualified and trained employees and volunteers.

### Codes of Conduct

The following are relevant:

Coaches, Officials, Volunteers, Members, Parents & Spectators.

## Part 2: Capability

### Policies for the recruitment, selection, training and management of employees

#### *Employing of staff*

- When recruiting staff for Redlands Touch holding a current Blue Card or eligible to receive a Blue Card is a requirement advertised as part of the position description for any role
- On the closure of the recruitment process all candidates are reviewed on merit
- Interviews are conducted with a panel three staff/volunteers from the organisation with no conflicts of interest
- Referees and Qualifications are checked prior to any offer being granted
- Redlands Touch offers staff a probationary period for the individual and organisation.

#### *Once appointed*

- Blue card is checked or application is sent through to the Commission for Children and Young People for processing
- All staff are required to hold a current blue card or have a pending application in process
- An Induction Program covers all aspects of the role and organisation policy and procedures including Children & Youth Risk Management Strategy for Redlands Touch
- Staff are expected to attend workshops on Children & Youth Risk Management workshops and training sessions conducted by the department and Sport and Recreation Services when they become available. From time to time we conduct our own education and training workshops as required.
- All staff should have undergone this training or be scheduled to undertake this training so that they are able to provide advice to members, clubs and volunteers.



### *Volunteer employees*

- When recruiting volunteers for Redlands Touch it is encouraged that all volunteers hold a current blue card or are eligible to receive a blue card
- Being an organisation that deals with both Children, Youth and Adults there are roles that do not require a blue card.
- Any volunteer that is working directly with or making decisions on behalf of children must have a blue card unless they are exempt under the Act.

### *Technical Officials/Referees*

- This refers to any participant undertaking training to become a Referee, Mentor or other Technical Official.
- As part of any course they complete the Application for a Blue card or Blue card validation form unless they are exempt. This ensures that by the time the officials have completed all aspects of their training they will have a current and valid blue card.
- The Association ensures all Technical Officials/Referees are familiar with the Code of Conduct and Child and Youth Risk Management policy so that all officials understand their responsibilities to Children & Youth and all participants of our sport.
- Technical officials are linked up with a Mentor or Referee Coordinator so they can seek clarification and support from these individuals in all areas including child & youth policies.

### **Part 3: Concerns**

Redlands Touch provides a comprehensive Membership Protection Policy and all affiliated teams, coaches, volunteers and members must abide by this policy.

#### **Policy and procedures for handling disclosures and suspicions of harm**

All employees & relevant volunteers at Redlands Touch will receive training in identifying risks of harm and handling disclosures or suspicions of harm as soon as possible upon commencing employment.

*Harm can be categorised in the following types:*

- Physical abuse, emotional or physiological abuse, neglect and/or sexual abuse or exploitation.

#### **How to receive a disclosure/suspicion of harm**

- When receiving a disclosure it will be done so in a private place and in a calm manner
- The reporting person will be told that they have done the right thing by telling us but that we need to tell someone else who can keep them safe
- We will only ask questions to confirm the need to report the matter
- We will not attempt to conduct our own investigation or mediate an outcome between the two parties.



### **Who a disclosure needs to be reported to**

- A disclosure of harm can be reported to any Redlands Touch employee or member of the Board of Management provided that they have had the necessary training to deal with this kind of matter.
- Upon the reporting of this disclosure to a Redlands Touch Staff member, the matter will then be referred to either the Department of Communities or the Queensland Police Service and the Board of Management.

### **Process of support for all people involved**

- Redlands Touch will provide support and counselling to the children and young people involved
- The person who reports suspected child abuse is protected from civil or legal actions
- Redlands Touch will keep all details of the person whom made the report confidential and will not be made available to the family of the child or the person who the claim is against
- If the person responding to the allegation of harm is an employee of Redlands Touch their duties will be reviewed. Any further interaction with children will be supervised at all times.

### **Immediate actions our organisation will take following disclosure/suspicion of harm and documentation**

The process in handling a complaint undertaken by Redlands Touch will be in accordance with the Member Protection Policy immediately following a disclosure or suspicion of harm.

### **Plan for managing breaches of the Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy**

This plan outlines the steps to be taken by Redlands Touch following a breach of this strategy.

- All stakeholders are to be made aware of the actions or inactions that form a breach as well as the potential outcomes of breaching the child and youth risk management strategy.
- Employees, volunteers, contractors, committee members, work experience students, parents and carers, children and young people must all comply with this plan.

### **Process to manage a breach of strategy**

- All people concerned will be advised of the process and be able to provide their version of events
- The Details of the breach, including the versions of all parties and the outcome will be recorded
- Matters discussed will be kept confidential.



### Suitable outcomes for breaches

- Disciplinary procedures if necessary
- Further education and training
- Providing closer supervision
- Mediating between those involved, or
- Reviewing current policies and procedures and developing new ones.

### Part 4: Consistency

- Compliance with Part 6 of the Commissions act (Blue Card Compliance)
- Contact person/s responsible for the management of the blue cards within the organisation - DIRECTOR OF JUNIORS/JUNIOR COMPETITION MANAGER
- Currently all officials and coaches and volunteers who work with children and youth on behalf of Redlands Touch must hold a current blue card
- The blue card register is stored on our network along with the letters of notification in an alphabetical file with our organisations human resource documentation
- Forms are provided to all new volunteers at their initial training with our organisation. They are advised that by signing the application form, they are consenting to the screening process under the act.
- The contact person (or their delegate) must be in attendance to sight documents with proof of identity and forms are to be signed in front of the candidates. A thorough check is completed and then the documents are sent by Redlands Touch to the Commission.
- Volunteers may commence duties with adult teams but they will not work with children or youth until they have received their blue card.

### Strategies for communication and support

Stakeholders of Redlands Touch consist of; parents/carers, athletes, coaches, officials, employees, teams and associated members. These stakeholders will be made aware of the child and youth risk management strategy through the following avenues;

- Policy and supporting material on Redlands Touch website
- Updates and reminders on child and youth risk management strategy through newsletters and club updates
- Training courses in coaching and officiating contain information sheets for policies and procedures and Code of Conduct including child and youth risk management strategy
- General communication of policies and strategies through
  - General meetings and AGM
  - Newsletters
  - Club correspondence
  - Risk management templates
  - Club information kits
- Redlands Touch employees and interested volunteers will be trained in the child and youth risk management and will be on hand to help/inform any stakeholders where assistance is required.



## **Part 5: Coaches and Managers of U/18 Athletes**

### **Communication through social networking sites & personal mobile phones**

Concerns are as follows:

- Communication tends to be social rather than professional in nature and it can involve the voluntary but often inadvertent 'lowering of professional boundaries'
- The coach may lose control of communication with athletes eg U18 athletes having the coach's mobile numbers/Facebook address - allows U18 athletes to initiate contact with coaches
- Coaches of U18 athletes can be exposed to extended and irrelevant information about students' personal lives
- There have been numerous cases where the ability to electronically communicate with U18 athletes has been abused exposing children to 'grooming' and harm.

Basic messages from above are:

- The issue of coach/U18 athlete communication using social networking is a professional boundary issue - not a technology issue.
- While convenient, communication with junior athletes electronically and via social networking sites may be very difficult to justify as necessary. It may lead to unintended consequences for coaches of U18 athletes, including disciplinary action and potential litigation.

### **Risk management strategies will be:**

1. All communication to U18 athletes [email, text message, FB] should be sent simultaneously to the athlete and a parent/guardian.
2. There should be no communication through social networking sites outside of officially sanctioned Pages linked to Redlands Touch.
3. All social networking Pages established for the specific purposes of communicating with junior teams, volunteers or officials must be set up under the Association's official site (No Closed Groups).
4. All sanctioned pages must be removed at the end of each respective season/term and administration privileges revoked when terms of appointment have ended.