Little Athletics Tasmania

Policy #16

Child Safe Policy

Reviewed

July 2024

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Foundation for all sports

Little Athletics Tasmania Child Safe Policy

1. Overview

Every child involved in The Tasmanian Little Athletics Association Incorporated (**LATas**) activities and events has the right to participate in an environment that is fun, safe and healthy and to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

LATas has a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse or unacceptable behaviour towards children.

Everyone involved in LATas has a role in keeping children safe and reporting unacceptable behaviour where necessary.

The aim of LATas's Child Safe Policy is to prevent abuse from occurring and ensuring that if allegations of child abuse are raised that they are properly addressed. All complaints that are made will be treated seriously, fully investigated and handled with maximum confidentiality and discretion.

From 1 July 2024 LATas will be required to comply with Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework as provided for in the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (Tas) (**the Act**).

The Act sets out 10 Child and Youth Safe Standards that organisations must follow, these are:

> **Standard 1:** Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
>
> **Standard 2:** Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
>
> **Standard 3:** Families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
>
> **Standard 4:** Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
>
> **Standard 5:** People working with young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
>
> **Standard 6:** Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
>
> **Standard 7:** Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
>
> **Standard 8:** Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
>
> **Standard 9:** Implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
>
> **Standard 10:** Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

In giving effect to these 10 standards organisations must implement the Universal Principle for Aboriginal Cultural Safety. This Universal Principle applies to all 10 standards and means that organisations such as LATas must respect the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

2. Policy Purpose

LATas is committed to providing the highest level of safety for all involved, particularly to children and young people. This includes promoting safety and wellbeing, upholding children and young persons' rights and aiming to prevent abuse and harm whilst delivering LATas activities and events.

This policy puts in practice the 10 Child and Youth Safe Standards and provides a framework to notify the Independent Regulator when concerns are raised about conduct related to child abuse involving an individual involved with or connected to LATas.

LATas is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.

3. Policy Scope

Child safety is a shared responsibility from all those involved in LATas between employees, coaches, volunteers, parents, and other members of the LATas community. Child abuse, harm or otherwise unacceptable behaviour should be reported to the appropriate person as soon as the individual is aware of such conduct.

This policy applies to the following people involved in LATas at a State Level and affiliated Centres and Clubs, whether they are in a paid, unpaid or voluntary capacity:

- Persons appointed or elected to boards, committees and sub-committees;
- Employees of LATas;
- Members of the LATas Executive;
- Support personnel appointed or elected to state teams and squads (e.g. managers, physiotherapists, psychologists, masseurs, sport trainers);
- State coaches and assistant coaches;
- State representative athletes;
- State referees, umpires and other officials involved in the regulation of the sport;
- Members, including life members of the LATas;
- Athletes, coaches, officials and other personnel participating in events and activities, including camps and training sessions, held or sanctioned by LATas; and
- Any other person including spectators, parents/guardians and sponsors, who or which agrees in writing (whether on a ticket, entry form or otherwise) to be bound by this policy.

This policy applies and will continue to apply even after cessation of employment, volunteering or involvement with LATas, if disciplinary action against that individual has commenced.

4. Related Documents, Policy and Legislation

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following:

a. The laws of the Commonwealth and Tasmania (as amended from time to time) and including but not limited to:

i. Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (Tas);

ii. Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (Tas);

iii. Criminal Code Act 1924 (Tas); and

iv. Criminal Code and Related Legislation Amendment (Child Abuse) Act 2019 (Tas).

b. LATas policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

i. Privacy Policy;

ii. Constitution;

iii. Code of Behaviour;

iv. Risk Management Framework;

v. Complaint Handling Policy; and

vi. Member Protection Policy.

5. Recognising and Reporting Child Abuse

If an individual who has involvement or a connection with LATas forms a reasonable suspicion that child abuse or reportable conduct may have occurred, it needs to be reported.

If there is immediate concern for the wellbeing or safety of a child, the individual must call Tasmanian Police on "000" as soon as practicable.

reportable conduct that constitutes child abuse may include but is not limited to:

a. physical abuse;

b. sexual abuse;

c. emotional or psychological harm;

d. neglect;

e. a sexual offence; or

f. grooming.

On and from 1 July 2024, LATas has a legal obligation to report to the Independent Regulator when it becomes aware of or has a reasonable suspicion to believe that reportable conduct has taken place.

LATas encourages any individual to make a report to the Tasmanian Police or to LATas if they believe that a child is not being protected or is concerned for their health, wellbeing or safety.

Individuals involved or connected with LATas who make a report in good faith and out of genuine concern for a child will be supported by LATas and will not be penalised for making a report. If an individual is unsure about making a report and has concerns, they may speak to the LATas MPIO, Laura McShane.

If an allegation of child abuse is made LATas will follow its reporting procedure, including compliance with the Reportable Conduct Scheme, and take all steps to ensure the health, safety

and wellbeing of the child. LATas will follow the guidance and comply with all necessary steps and directions by the Tasmanian Police and the Independent Regulator.

The Act provides that Leaders within an organisation must notify the Independent Regulator within three business days providing details of the reportable conduct and the details of the alleged individual.

Leaders must start an investigation as soon as practicable or direct an independent investigator to do so and provide an update of information within 30 days to the Independent Regulator.

After the conclusion of the investigation Leaders must provide an update to the Independent Regulator of the findings of the investigation and details of any actions that have been taken as a result.

LATas will keep and maintain a register of any allegations of child abuse or otherwise unacceptable behaviour towards a child.

6. Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

All those involved with or connected to LATas have a shared role in protecting children. Those individuals are expected to:

a. understand the rights of children;

b. respect cultural and religious practices of children and their families;

c. understand and appropriately respond to needs of children with disabilities;

d. appropriately act on any concerns raised by a child;

e. understand the definitions, indicators and impacts of child abuse;

f. understand and follow all rules, regulations and legislation in relation to the care of children;

g. co-operate with Police, Independent Regulators and others conducting formal investigations; and

h. not harm or otherwise act in an unacceptable way towards all children who participate in LATas activities or events.

7. Recruitment and Screening

LATas acknowledges, understands and complies with all Tasmanian legal requirements for background checks of employees, contractors and volunteers.

LATas undertakes a recruitment and screening process which aims to:

a. promote and protect the health, wellbeing and safety of children who participate in LATas activities or events;

b. recruit the safest and most suitable candidates who share the same or similar values as LATas; and

c. prevent any individual from involvement in LATas if they pose a risk to children.

LATas requires all employees, contractors and volunteers to undergo relevant screening and to hold a valid working with children and vulnerable people card pursuant to the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas).

LATas provides relevant training, support and documentation to employees, contractors and volunteers prior to commencing their position with LATas.

8. Breach of Policy

Any individual that has been found to have breached this policy in any way is subject to disciplinary action and the processes as provided for in LATas's Code of Behaviour and Complaints Handling Policy.

9. Record Keeping

LATas will maintain and keep a record of any reports of concern for a child's safety and of child abuse.

In maintaining and keeping records LATas will maintain confidentiality and privacy for children and families in accordance with relevant legislation and LATas's Privacy Policy.

LATas will appropriately update the Risk Register in accordance with LATas's Risk Management Framework to maintain the health, wellbeing and safety of children involved in LATas's activities and events.

10. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the LATas Board in accordance with LATas review process and updated where necessary.

If you would like to provide feedback on this policy, please contact LATas the details of which are:

Little Athletics Tasmania

PO Box 812
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Telephone: 1300 888 713

Email: office@taslittleathletics.com.au

11. Definitions

child means a person involved in activities and events of LATas including athletes and spectators under the age of 18 years old unless as otherwise defined by legislation (for example a child is defined as under 17 years of age in relation to child sex offences in the Criminal Code Act 1924 (Tas)).

child Abuse means any act or omission by a parent, caregiver or other adult that results in actual or potential harm to a child including but not limited to physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, grooming, bullying and neglect.

grooming means building or establishing a relationship with a child for the purpose of engaging in sexual behaviour with the child and for the avoidance of doubt may take place in a range of social settings and use various communication methods or techniques.

Independent Regulator means the independent body that LATas must notify upon being made aware of reportable conduct.

Leader means an individual who is primarily responsible for the decision making at LATas.

Mandatory Reporter means an individual or an organisation who is legally required to report to the Independent Regulator if they are aware or have a reasonable suspicion of child abuse or other reportable conduct.

Reasonable Suspicion means an idea that is formed on the basis of incomplete information and includes but is not limited to observing conduct, hearing from a child that conduct occurred, hearing a rumour that conduct occurred, observing conduct that seemed unusual or unacceptable and receiving information from another source about concerning conduct.

Reportable Conduct Scheme means the reportable conduct scheme as provided for in the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (Tas).