KEEPING OUR UNITED FAMILY SAFE

CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Shepparton United Soccer Club is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where every child and young person can enjoy football, develop their skills and feel respected.

As a proud, family-oriented and multicultural club, we believe every child has the right to participate in football free from abuse, neglect, bullying, discrimination, harassment and harm.

The safety and wellbeing of children is everyone's responsibility. All committee members, coaches, team managers, volunteers, parents, carers, spectators and players are expected to contribute to a positive and safe football environment.

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct

1. Our Expectations

Everyone involved with Shepparton United Soccer Club is expected to:

- Treat every child with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Put the safety and wellbeing of children first.
- Use appropriate and respectful language and behaviour.
- Promote inclusion, cultural safety and equal opportunities.
- Respect children's individual needs, personal boundaries and right to have a voice.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries when interacting with children.
- Follow the club's child safety policies and applicable Football Victoria and Football Australia requirements.
- Report any concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing promptly.

2. Behaviour We Do Not Accept

Shepparton United Soccer Club does not tolerate:

- Child abuse, grooming or any form of exploitation.
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination or racism.
- Physical punishment, threats, intimidation or verbal abuse.
- Inappropriate physical contact or behaviour that makes a child feel unsafe.
- Inappropriate relationships or communications between adults and children.
- Unauthorised sharing of children's personal information, photographs or videos.
- Ignoring, concealing or failing to appropriately report child safety concerns.

Everyone has a responsibility to speak up when behaviour places a child at risk.

3. Coaches, Team Managers and Volunteers

Coaches, team managers and volunteers have additional responsibilities because of their roles and interactions with junior players. They must maintain safe, professional and appropriate boundaries at all times.

They must:

- Provide appropriate supervision during training, matches and club activities.
- Communicate respectfully and use appropriate club communication channels.
- Avoid inappropriate one-on-one situations with children.
- Respect children's privacy, dignity and personal boundaries.
- Follow club procedures for changing rooms, transport, photography and other activities involving children.
- Maintain required Working with Children Checks and meet applicable screening and training requirements.
- Raise child safety concerns promptly through the appropriate reporting channels.

4. Parents, Carers and Spectators

Parents, carers and spectators play an important role in creating a positive football environment.

Everyone is expected to:

- Encourage children to enjoy football and develop their skills.
- Treat players, families, coaches, referees, officials and volunteers respectfully.
- Avoid abusive, threatening or humiliating behaviour.
- Respect children's privacy when taking or sharing photographs and videos.
- Follow club and competition codes of conduct.
- Raise concerns appropriately and help maintain a safe and inclusive environment.

5. Communication and Online Safety

All communication involving children must be appropriate, respectful and relevant to football or their wellbeing.

Adults must not send inappropriate or secretive messages to children, engage in online grooming or use social media to threaten, shame or exploit a child.

Photographs, videos and personal information must be handled in accordance with club procedures, consent arrangements and applicable privacy requirements. Photography and filming are not permitted in change rooms, toilets or other private spaces.

6. Inclusion and Cultural Safety

Shepparton United Soccer Club welcomes children from all backgrounds and is committed to ensuring every child feels included, respected and supported.

We will promote:

- Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their cultures.
- Respect for cultural, religious, linguistic and family differences.
- Equal opportunities for girls and boys to participate safely.
- Inclusion of children with disability and additional support needs.
- An environment free from racism, discrimination, bullying and exclusion.

Every child deserves to feel that they belong at United.

Reporting a Child Safety Concern

Any concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child must be taken seriously and acted on promptly.

If a child discloses abuse or harm, listen calmly, take them seriously and reassure them that they have done the right thing by speaking up. Do not promise secrecy or attempt to investigate the matter yourself.

How to report a concern

Concerns can be raised with the club's Child Safety Officer (Kevin Singh) or the President. If the concern involves either person, or you do not feel comfortable reporting through the club, you can contact the relevant external authority directly.

Where required, concerns must be reported to the appropriate authorities in accordance with legal obligations. If a child is in immediate danger, call 000.

The club will handle reports sensitively, maintain confidentiality as far as possible and take appropriate action to protect children.

No person should be disadvantaged for raising a genuine child safety concern in good faith.

Breaches of the Code

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously. Depending on the circumstances, action may include education, formal warnings, restrictions on involvement with children, suspension or removal from club duties, disciplinary action or referral to Football Victoria, Football Australia or the relevant authorities.

All breaches will be addressed appropriately, with the safety and wellbeing of children remaining the club's highest priority.

Our Commitment

Shepparton United Soccer Club is committed to continually improving its child safety practices and providing an environment where children and young people feel safe, heard, included and supported.

The safety and wellbeing of every child is everyone's responsibility.

Child Safety Resources

For further information about child safeguarding requirements and policies in football, please refer to the following official resources.

Football Australia –Safeguarding Policy

Information about safeguarding expectations and the protection of children and other participants in football.

View Football Australia's Safeguarding Policy

Football Victoria – Child Safety Resources

Guidance, resources, policies and templates to help Victorian football clubs strengthen their child safety practices.

View Football Victoria's Child Safety Resources