

WESTSIDE GYMNASTICS

Child Safe Complaints Handling Procedure

This Procedure sets out how we receive, respond to, investigate, report and record child safety complaints.

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Purpose

Westside Gymnastics is committed to fostering an open complaints culture where everyone, including children, feels comfortable raising a concern. This Procedure sets out how we receive, respond to, investigate, report and record child safety complaints.

Scope

This Procedure applies to any concern or complaint relating to the safety or wellbeing of a child in connection with Westside Gymnastics' activities, whether raised by a child, parent/guardian, staff member, volunteer, contractor or any other person.

Terms and Definitions

Terms used in this Procedure have the same meaning as in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, including Child, Child abuse, CSWO, Owner/Director and GA Integrity.

Guiding Principles

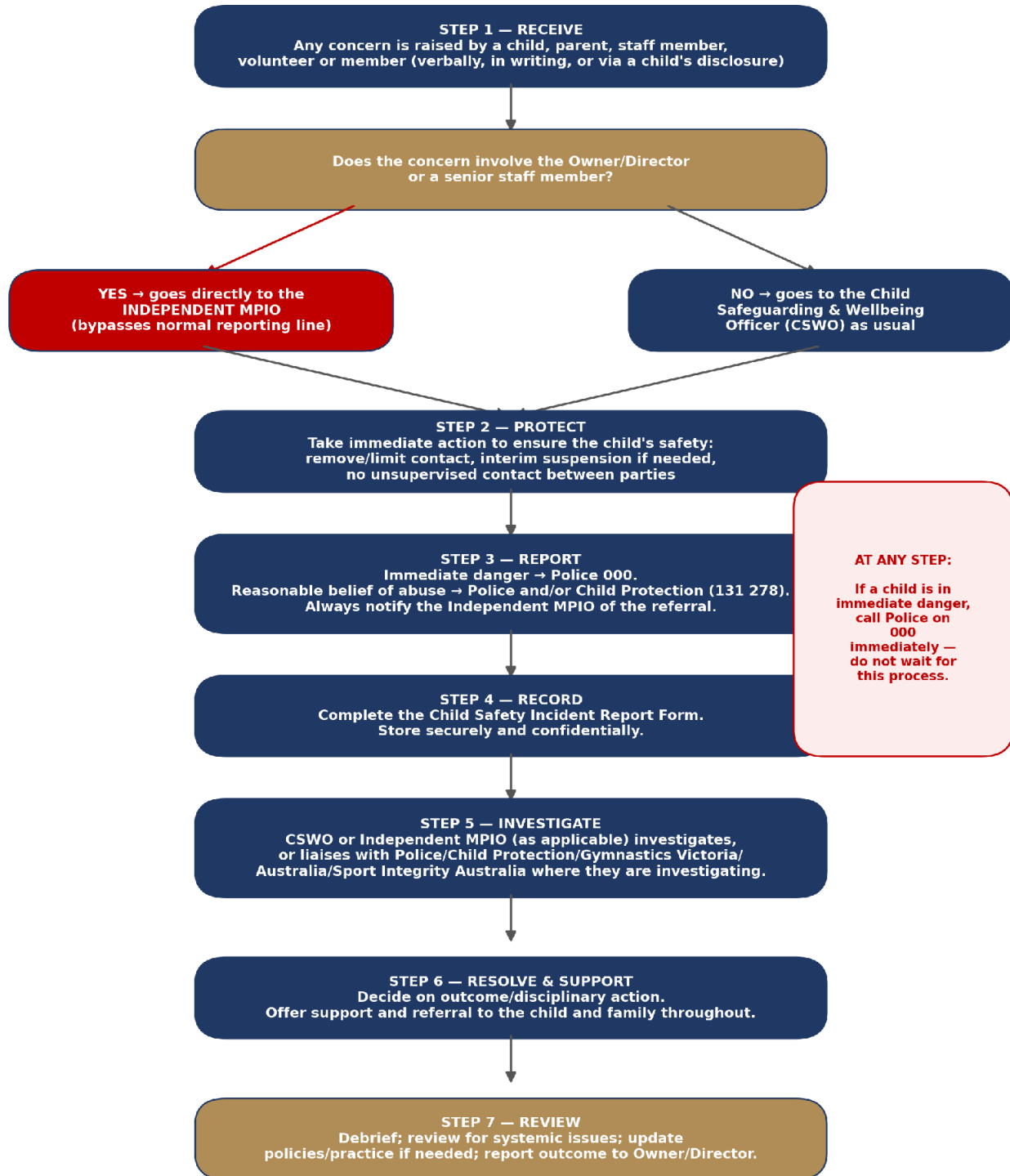
- The safety of the child comes first, at every step.
- Every complaint is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and handled sensitively.
- A complaint involving the Owner/Director, a member of their family, or a senior staff member is handled by GA Integrity, not through the normal reporting line.
- A person making a complaint, and a person the subject of a complaint, are never left in an unsupervised situation together during a process.
- Information is kept confidential to the extent the law allows.

The Complaints Process - Overview

The flowchart below summarises the process; each step is explained in the sections that follow.

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Westside Gymnastics — Child Safe Complaints Flowchart



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Receiving Complaints

A complaint or concern can be raised verbally or in writing, with any staff member, the CSWO, or with GA Integrity. Where the concern involves the Owner/Director or a senior staff member, it must be raised directly with GA Integrity.

Responding to Child-Initiated Complaints

If a child discloses a concern directly, the person they tell should: listen calmly and without interrupting; reassure the child they were right to speak up and it is not their fault; not promise secrecy; explain that other people may need to be told to keep the child safe; and promptly and accurately write down what was said, in the child's own words, without asking leading questions.

Responding to Adult-Initiated Complaints

Where an adult raises a concern on behalf of a child, or about the conduct of another adult, the CSWO (or GA Integrity, as applicable) will acknowledge the complaint, explain the process, and begin the steps below.

Reporting Child Safety Complaints

- If a child is in immediate danger: call Victoria Police on 000 immediately.
- If there is a reasonable belief a child has been, or is at risk of being, abused: report to Victoria Police and/or Child Protection (131 278), in accordance with legal reporting obligations.
- Notify GA Integrity of any external report made, regardless of who is handling the matter.
- Where relevant, report to Gymnastics Victoria, Gymnastics Australia and/or Sport Integrity Australia in accordance with the National Integrity Framework.

Investigate

Depending on the nature of the complaint, up to three investigations may run in parallel: a criminal investigation (Police), a child protection investigation (Child Protection), and an internal review (by the CSWO or, where the Owner/Director or senior staff are involved, GA Integrity). Internal review will not proceed in a way that could compromise a Police or Child Protection investigation.

Risk Evaluation and Interim Safety Measures

The CSWO or GA Integrity will assess immediate risk and may take interim steps such as adjusting supervision arrangements, redeploying a person to a role without unsupervised contact with children, or suspending a person pending the outcome of a process. Legal advice should be sought before any interim action affecting an employee.

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Disciplinary Action

Following investigation, disciplinary action (if any) is determined in accordance with the Member Protection Policy and may include a warning, retraining, restriction of duties, suspension, or termination of membership, employment or engagement.

Debrief and Support

The child and their family will be offered appropriate support and information about referral services throughout the process. Support will also be considered for any other affected party.

Complaints Review and Analysis

Following a complaint, the CSWO (or GA Integrity) will review what happened to identify any systemic issues, organisational risks, or improvements needed to policy or practice, and will keep accurate records of the review, its findings, and any changes made.

Confidentiality and Privacy

Information relating to a complaint is kept confidential to the extent permitted by law, and is only shared where necessary to protect a child, keep relevant parties appropriately informed, or comply with a legal reporting obligation. See the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy for further detail.

Record Keeping

Westside Gymnastics keeps complete and accurate records of all serious child abuse matters for 40 years, and other complaint records for a minimum of 7 years, stored securely and accessibly only to authorised persons.

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Referral and Support Services

Service	Contact
Victoria Police - emergency	0 0 0
Victoria Police - non-urgent	(03) 9247 6666
Child Protection (Dept. of Families, Fairness and Housing)	131 278
Kids Helpline (ages 5–25)	1800 55 1800
Lifeline	13 11 14
1800RESPECT (sexual assault / family violence)	1800 737 732
Parentline Victoria	13 22 89
Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency	(03) 9287 8800
Yarning Safe N Strong	1800 959 563
Safe Steps (family violence, 24/7)	1800 015 188

Review

This Procedure is reviewed annually by the CSWO with input from governing bodies, or earlier if required by legislative or regulatory change. Significant amendments are approved by the Owner/ Director, with the GA Integrity's sign-off required for any change to the escalation pathway.

Related Policies and Procedures

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Member Protection Policy
- Gymnastics Australia Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Gymnastics Australia Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy

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Relevant Legislation

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)

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Appendix A - Child Safety Incident Report Form

This form is used to record all child safety complaints at Westside Gymnastics. If there is an immediate threat to a child's safety, call Police on 000 first.

Complainant's Details

Full name:	Date:
Role (parent, coach, gymnast, staff, spectator, etc.):	Contact number / email:
Is this on behalf of a child? ☐ No ☐ Yes — relationship to child:	

Child's Details

Name:	Age:
Address:	
Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander? ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown	
Disability? ☐ No ☐ Yes — details:	
CALD background? ☐ No ☐ Yes — details:	
Communication support needed (interpreter, support person, etc.)? ☐ No ☐ Yes — details:	

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Nature of the Incident

☐ Emotional/psychological abuse ☐ Neglect ☐ Sexual abuse ☐ Grooming ☐ Physical abuse
☐ Exposure to family/domestic violence ☐ Breach of Code of Conduct ☐ Other (please detail):

Does this involve the Owner/Director or a senior staff member? ☐ No ☐ Yes — if yes, this form must go directly to the Independent MPIO.

Location/date/time of alleged incident:

Description of the incident:

Person Complained About (Respondent)

Full name:

Role at the club:

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Immediate Actions Taken

Interim action taken (if any):

Police contacted? ☐ No ☐ Yes — who / when / advice given:

Child Protection contacted? ☐ No ☐ Yes — who / when / advice given:

CSWO / Independent MPIO notified? ☐ No ☐ Yes — who / when:

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Investigation and Outcome (completed by CSWO / GA Integrity)

Investigation findings:

Action taken:

Completed by (name, role, signature, date):

This record must be kept confidential and stored securely in accordance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.