



SPORT INTEGRITY  
AUSTRALIA

Safeguarding  
in Sport

# Photography and Filming of Children and Young People in Sport

FEBRUARY 2024

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and future and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise the outstanding contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to sport in Australia and celebrate the power of sport to promote reconciliation and reduce inequality.



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Photos and videos have long been an essential tool for families to capture memories and celebrate the achievements of children and young people in sport. For clubs and organisations, digital content is one way you can engage and promote sport to participants, supporters, sponsors, and the wider community.

The purpose of these guidelines is to outline the steps clubs and organisations should take to safeguard children and young people from the inappropriate use of their images by applying the Children and Young People Safe Practices.

For the purpose of this document, the reference to children and young people refers to any person under the age of 18, and the reference to child sexual abuse images refer to images and video of children or young people that depict child sexual abuse – previously referred to as child pornography.



## What are the risks associated with taking images of children?

While most people taking photos and/or videos do so for appropriate reasons, there is the potential that people may look to inappropriately use images with the intent to harm and abuse children and young people. Understanding the risks involved and how you can minimise potential harm to children and young people will help keep them safer.

The introduction of smart phones means the taking and sharing of images is has become easier than ever. At times we take photos or videos and share them with others or through social media without giving consideration to the possible unintended outcome that could result.

Recent studies show online abuse and sextortion are the fastest growing trends in child sexual abuse, so it's important to be able to understand and prevent these types of offences from occurring at your sport.

The risks associated with photos and videos include:

### 1. Children and young people can be impacted by the taking or use of images

Every photo or video, and any comments made about them, become a part of a child's/young person's public image. Regardless of whether a photo or video was taken with a child or young person's consent, the image may attract negative comments such as trolling or online bullying if it's posted online. This can have negative effects on a child or young person's self-worth.

If a child or young person feels like they have no control over how an image of them is being used, they may experience feelings such as anxiety and depression, loneliness, isolation, and low self-esteem. This may also affect how they see themselves long-term.

### 2. Children and young people may be identified, contacted, and groomed

If a child or young person's personal information (name, address, club or even school name) are included alongside their image it can make them identifiable and therefore vulnerable to individuals looking to locate, contact or potentially 'groom' them for abuse.

Even if personal details do not accompany the photo, other details identifying the sporting organisation, school or club, or their favourite sportsperson or team, could also be used to access and groom the child or young person.

There could also be an increased risk of identification of, and contact with, a child or young person by someone who has been deemed to be a risk to a child/young person. This could be relevant for children/young people who are subject to legal care and protection orders, children/young people with an estranged parent where there had been previous concerns about domestic violence, or in situations where there may be Apprehended Violence Orders in place.

It is important to remember that some children and young people may be under care and protection orders where their legal guardian is the state or territory and no longer their parents. In such cases the child/young person cannot be photographed unless consent has been gained from the relevant Minister.

### 3. Someone might create inappropriate or illegal images of children or young people

Sporting environments can present opportunities for people to take or produce exploitative images of children and young people, either by taking photos or videos of children and young people that contain inappropriate content, or by using images inappropriately or out of context. For example:

- Individuals may deliberately target sports activities to take potentially illegal and harmful images, such as:
  - images of children or young people changing
  - photos taken in the toilets
  - using a camera at ground level, possibly to take 'up skirt' images.
- Images that appear safe can be used inappropriately and out of context by others (for example, images from some angles of athletes doing the splits).
- Images can be copied and edited to create child-abuse images.
- AI technology can be used to digitally alter images in the public domain to create and distribute child sexual abuse material.

*Remember: A person who asks for, accesses, possesses, creates, or shares sexualised images of someone under 18 may be at risk of criminal charges – even if both parties are under 18 and agreed to the conduct.*



## 4. Children and young people can recklessly take or share photos of other children and young people

It's now highly likely that in most junior sporting teams, either some or all the children and young people involved will own or have access to a smart phone with a camera. This creates a unique set of risks among children and young people. For example:

- Children and young people often don't understand how the taking and sharing of an image can have potential damaging consequences. They may take photos of other children and young people in compromising positions in an attempt at humour but when shared can cause significant distress to the person being photographed.
- While sporting clubs and organisations can prevent staff from bringing recording equipment into change rooms, it's much more difficult to ensure children and young people follow these rules. This increases the risk of inappropriate images being shared by children and young people in your sport.
- A lack of understanding of the impacts of sharing images without consent can lead to privately shared sexual images between young people being re-shared without consent, possibly entering the public domain.
- Some images of children in a state of undress or in a compromising image can be used to extort money or even further sexualised images, this is known as sextortion.

*Remember: A person who asks for, accesses, possesses, creates, or shares sexualised images of someone under 18 may be at risk of criminal charges – even if both parties are under 18 and agreed to the conduct.*

## 5. Talented young athletes can be exposed to an increased risk of image related issues

As young athletes progress into the elite areas of their sport, their success can lead to an increased public profile, due to:

- Elite-level events being more likely to take place in a public arena.
- Event organisers and sport's governing bodies looking to positively promote the athlete and their success.
- Elite young athletes who receive endorsements or sponsorship welcoming positive media coverage on a local, state, or national level.

An increase in public exposure may lead to a greater safeguarding risk and in these situations, clubs and organisations retain their duty of care to these athletes.



Sporting clubs and organisations must ensure that the athletes and their parent/carer consent to images being taken, and any information that is published alongside them.

At all times during the process, the Children and Young People Safe Practices must be implemented including gaining informed consent, adequate supervision during photography, and storing and use of the photos.

In addition, athletes, their parent/carer, and media representatives need to be briefed about appropriate arrangements and ground rules for interviews, videos, and photo sessions. Sports clubs and organisations should help to manage these issues as part of their overall [support of elite athletes](#).

While in public spaces, including events held in public arenas, members of the public may take photos of talented young athletes without their knowledge. Similarly, fans may request that a young athlete pose for a selfie with them. There are no rules prohibiting members of the public from taking these types of photos in public spaces. Clubs and organisations should keep an eye out for situations where members of the public looking to take photos of or with young athletes are becoming burdensome or uncomfortable. In these situations, the club should look to make the persons responsible aware of their actions.

Young athletes should also be educated to know how these types of images may be shared, and that if they feel uncomfortable in a situation involving a fan trying to take photos of them or take a selfie with them, that they should attempt to remove themselves from the situation and make their feelings known to a person in a position of authority at the club or organisation.

## Taking steps to reduce the risk of harm or abuse

Recognising that it can be difficult to police parents/carers and spectators from recording or taking photos of sporting events, here are some tips on ways to ensure children and young people at your club or organisation can safely participate without their images being used inappropriately:

- Obtain consent of the child/young person.
- Inform them of what images will be taken and where they will be used. If a child/young person does not wish to be photographed or filmed, they should not be.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of and follow the requirements of your photography and filming policy.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action when staff, volunteers or children and young people fail to follow the policy.
- Outline the club or organisation's expectations on photography/filming to parents/carers and children/young people. It may help if in pre-season, the rules around photography and filming are discussed with the family and athlete.
- Consider having signage at the event that promotes the practices of the your club or organisation. If it is in a public area, provide signage/information around respecting the privacy of the athletes in the taking of photos/filming in a public place.
- Some sports, due to the nature of their uniform and activities, such as swimming, gymnastics, and athletics, can present a higher risk for potential misuse than other sports, so images of these activities should:
  - focus on the activity rather than a particular child/young person.
  - avoid showing the full face and body of a child/young person – instead show children/young people in the water, or from the waist or shoulders up.
  - avoid images and camera angles that may be more prone to misinterpretation or misuse.

- provide children with information about what to do if they think someone is photographing or filming them without their consent or if they feel scared or upset by the photographer.
- where it is seen that a person is taking a photo or filming that is against the policy of your club or organisation, they should be asked to stop and delete any images that they have taken.
- Have a code of conduct for children and young people that prohibits them from taking images of their peers in change rooms or in a state of undress.
- Ensure children and young people only share approved images on their social media, as they are images that represent your sport, as this could unintentionally damage the reputation of your sport.
- Ensure children don't engage in negative comments/trolling of others.



If an unknown person is taking photos or video at a sporting event, the event organiser or management should ask the person to respect the safeguarding of children and young people policy your sport has. They should ask the person to stop and delete any photos that have been taken.

If anyone has reasonable concerns that a person (adult or child) is taking photos or filming illegally, such as in areas like toilets/change rooms or for sexual purposes, contact the police immediately.

## Use of images of Children and Young People by a Sporting Club or Organisation

Sporting clubs and organisations can benefit from using images of young participants to promote and celebrate activities, events, and competitions. Coaches may also utilise video as a tool to help and support skill development, to provide feedback to participants and to assist individual and team performance.

As illustrated above, the use of photos and video content on social media, websites and in print media can pose direct and indirect risks to children and young people if not managed appropriately.

Here are some tips:

- Choose images that represent the sport/event in a positive light and promote the best aspects of the sport and your club or organisation.
- Consider action shots that don't show the child/young person's face or identifying details
- Consider if the uniform or pose of the child/young person could be considered inappropriate or sexualised.
- Reduce the opportunity for images to be copied from websites and social media. e.g. disable the right click function of the mouse used to copy an image
- Monitor the comments of images on social media and turn off and delete comments if they are considered abusive.

- Consider using paid stock images or illustrations. Using stock images and illustrations rather than images of children or young people to promote events or activities removes any risk of misuse.
- Ask children/young people and their parents to approve the image before using it, even where you have consent.

Clubs or organisations wishing to use or permit the use of images of children and young people involved in their activities must have a policy in place that safeguards them and must have considered all the known risks and taken steps to reduce or remove those risk. This policy should outline the safeguarding practices that must be implemented in relation to acquiring, using, and storing images of children and young people.

The Children and Young People Safe Practices are list of practical ways to protect children and young people. The Practices listed below under the required section are mandatory under your sport's Safeguarding of Children and Young People Policy.

*For the purpose of these Practices, "images" refers to both photos and video.*

## **TAKING PHOTOS AND VIDEOS:**

### **Required:**

- **Obtain written consent from parents/carers.**

If this is undertaken as part of the registration process where parents agree to terms and conditions, the details must clearly state:

- what images can be taken
- how the images may be used
- who will have access to the images
- how the images will be stored
- how and when the images will be disposed of
- that the athlete or parent can remove consent at any time

If the consent gained is for a specific event/activity, the sporting club or organisation will be required to gain further consent from the parent/carer and child/young person for other events/activities that fall outside of what had previously been consented to.

Coaches that use images as a tool to assist in athlete and/or team development are required to gain consent for this purpose, outlining the above information when obtaining the consent.

If parent/carer consent is not gained, images of the child/young person should not be taken.

- **Images should not be taken on personal devices where possible.**

A club or organisation's camera should be used to record all official images, where possible by a person who holds a Working with Children Check (WWCC) in accordance with state and territory legislation.

If a club or organisation doesn't have club photography equipment, you should implement a procedure for using a personal device to take photos and/or videos on behalf of the club or organisation to align with child safe practices.



Such a procedure should include:

- when photos/video are allowed to be taken
- who is authorised to take the photos/video
- prioritising using club personnel or volunteers with a WWCC to take photos and video of children and young people on the clubs behalf
- the requirement to obtain the consent of the child or young person and their parent or carer
- the requirement for all photos taken to be in a sporting context
- how images and videos should be stored and deleted when no longer required
- rules for sharing images and introducing images into the public domain

As a club or organisation, you should endeavour to educate your personnel around these procedures.

Alternatively, you can engage a professional photographer with a valid WWCC (or equivalent) to take photos or videos. Please refer to the section below for more information on using professional photographers.

- **Images taken of children and young people must be directly related to their participation in their sport.**
- **As part of the induction process, ensure all staff and volunteers are made aware of the club or organisation's policies and practices relating to photography/filming.**
- **Always ensure that children and young people are dressed in their sport attire, including, where practical, safety equipment.**
- **Do not post images that may be considered revealing or inappropriate or that focus on the private areas of the body.**
- **Images are not to be taken by anyone in changing room or toilet facilities.**

This includes participants, coaches, parents, administrators, officials, employees and volunteers, and includes children and young people.

- **Images are not to be taken of unsupervised children/young people.**

Another adult should always be present to supervise the child/young person having their photo taken – i.e. no one on one photo sessions.

## USING PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

### Required:

- **Images must only be used for official purposes relating to the sport.**
- **Images must only be used based on the consent provided.**

If consent has only been provided by the parent/carer to use an image for skill development purposes, the image must not be used for marketing purposes.
- **Consent to use the image is required from the parent/carer and child/young person before the image is taken.**

If consent has not been provided by the parent/carer and child/young person, the image should not be used until consent is gained.
- **Review all images of children and young people carefully prior to public use.**

Show the images to the child or young person in the photo to ensure they are happy with the image being used. This includes use on any website, social media channel, or other publications.
- **Only use images where children/young people are appropriately dressed in their sporting attire, and they are appropriately positioned.**

Do not take images that focus on private or intimate areas of the child/young person's body.
- **Do not include any personal details of the child or young person with an image.**

This includes not using, name, address, email address, telephone number and interests.
- **Provide identifiable markers to children and young people who do not have consent to have their images taken.**

Examples may include coloured wrist bands.
- **Ensure children and young people who do not have consent to have their images taken do not feel excluded.**

Consider other activities or actions to include these children/young people.

## General Guidance

### Events conducted in Public Areas

Where the event or activity is conducted in a public area, there are no laws restricting photography of people (including children and young people), as long as the images themselves are not illegal. This means that members of the public can take photos or videos as long as they are not:

- indecent (such as 'up skirt' or 'down-blouse' photos or videos)
- taken covertly in change rooms or toilets
- taken or used for sexual pleasure
- for the purpose of observing a person's genital or anal region
- protected by a court order (such as child custody or witness protection)
- defamatory
- being taken or used for commercial purposes (to endorse or sell a product) without the person's consent.

Regardless of any policies or procedures your sport may have around photography, organisers cannot impose additional photography rules on members of the public accessing or using the same public space.

Where events are held in public areas, the sport should notify participants, parents/carers, and spectators that photos can be taken without prior consent being required. However, it should be noted that if a person asks for their photo not be taken, this request should be respected.

If there are any indications or concerns that an individual may be taking images of children and young people that are inappropriate or illegal, this should immediately be reported to the organisers, who have the responsibility for contacting the police.

For further information on Child Safeguarding Practices in public areas refer to *Safeguarding Considerations for Events Held in Public Areas*, accessible on the [Sport Integrity Australia website resource page](#).



## Private Facilities

Where a sporting event is held on a club's private facility, privately owned land, or a school or council owned facilities, the owner of private property or venue can restrict, ban, or require permission of photography anywhere in their venue - for example, many council venues will include rules and signage that prohibits the use of mobile phones or cameras in change rooms or toilets.

Sporting clubs and organisations need to be aware of who is responsible for the venue where their events are being held. Where a sporting event is held at the venue that is not owned/leased by the organisers, it is good practice to agree on a photography policy as part of the hiring contract for the venue.

## Live Streaming of an Event

Many sporting organisations are now live streaming events as a tool to increase exposure and access to their sport. Where events involving children and young people are being live streamed, the club or organisation should implement these practices:

- Provide details of the event and where it will be live streamed to the parents/carers.
- Gain written consent from parents/carers for their child/young person to participate in the live streamed event. If live streaming is a regular event, such as weekly games, a consent form can be provided at the beginning of the season that captures all the games.
- If parents/carers consent is not obtained, the child or young person should not be filmed.
- Where parents/carers have not consented for their child to be involved in the a live streamed event, the sport will need to decide how they will accommodate these children and young people.
- The sport is best placed to make this decision given their extensive knowledge of their specific environment and operational considerations regarding live streaming and broadcasting of their events.



## Using Official or Professional Photographers

Sporting clubs and organisations will often seek the services of a professional photographer or videographer for important events. This can pose an additional risk to children and young people, and it is important that all contractors are aware of their safeguarding requirements.

If a sporting club or organisation hires an official or professional photography service, the club or organisation must implement the following Children and Young People Safe Practices:

- Inform parents/carers and children/young people that a photographer will be in attendance.
- Ensure parents/carers and children/young people consent to both the taking and publication of videos or photos – the *Sporting Organisation Photography and Filming Consent Form* is available on the [Sport Integrity Australia website resource page](#).
- Check the photographer's identity, that they have a Working with Children Check, the validity of their role, and confirm the purpose and use of the images to be taken.
- Issue the photographer with identification, such as an official photographer vest, which must be worn at all times.
- Provide the photographer with a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of image content and their behaviour.
- Tell children and young people there is an official photographer present, who they are, where they can and can't be photographed and what they can expect from their image being taken. Allow them the opportunity to withdraw their consent.
- Clarify areas where photography can be taken and areas where all photography is prohibited including toilets, changing areas, first aid areas.
- Inform the photographer about children and young people that do not have parent/carer consent, how to identify them and to avoid taking images of them.
- Remind the photographer they are not to be alone with a child or young person when taking photos. If individual photos are being taken, they are to be taken in an open area where supervision can occur.
- Confirm that the club or organisation is only consenting to photos/videos to be taken for the event or activity and not outside of the event/activity.
- Clarify intellectual property ownership of any images, and for how long they'll be retained and/or used by the photographer.
- Should a new purpose for previously taken images be required, additional consent must be sought.



## Illegal Images

In Australia, it is illegal to take photos or videos in public spaces that are:

- indecent (such as 'up skirt' or 'down-blouse' photos or videos)
- taken covertly in change rooms or toilets
- taken or used for sexual pleasure
- for the purpose of observing a person's genital or anal region
- protected by a court order (such as child custody or witness protection)
- defamatory
- being taken of a person to use for commercial purposes (to endorse or sell a product) without their knowledge and consent

It is also illegal to produce, share and distribute child sexual abuse images, including images of someone's own child.

## Secure Storage and Destruction of Images

Images or video recordings of children and young people must be stored securely. This means:

- Hard copies of images should be stored securely or returned to the parent/carer and/or child/young person.
- Electronic images should be kept on a club or organisation's approved device and in a protected folder with restricted access.
- Images should not be stored on unprotected portable equipment such as memory sticks or portable hard drives. Images kept on laptops or mobile phones should be password protected and only accessible by those who require access for the purpose of their role.
- Images (hard copy or digital) should be destroyed/deleted once they are no longer required.

Best practice states that all images should be inventoried, including the image file name (if digital), persons in the image, date the image was created and date the image should be destroyed.

Records should also be kept of anyone who has access to images either physically or digitally.

Where possible, personal equipment should not be used to take photos and videos of children or young people – use only official cameras or devices belonging to the club or organisation. If the club or organisation does not have their own equipment and is reliant on using equipment supplied by volunteers, the club or organisation is required to put practices in place to ensure the protection of the images. This extends to storage devices, including storage media used in photographic equipment.

If you are storing and using photos to identify children, young people and adults for official purposes – such as identity cards – ensure you comply with the legal requirements for handling personal information.

## Reporting a Concern

All staff, volunteers, children, young people, and parents/carers should be provided with name and contact details of the appropriate person to make a report to and be informed on how to make a report if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography.

These concerns can include how images are being taken, who they are being taken by, where they are being taken, if they don't feel comfortable being photographed, or if they don't feel comfortable about the way the photos are being taken.

Any concerns should be reported to the person responsible for dealing with such matters at your club or organisation. This could be the Child Safe Officer, Integrity Officer, or Complaints Officer. Such complaints should be handled in accordance with the club or organisation's complaints procedure (e.g. if the club or organisation is signed up to the National Integrity Framework (NIF), the complaint will be addressed according to the Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy).

Concerns about professional photographers should also be reported to their employers or in the case of a self-employed photographer, the [Consumer Affairs Agency](#).

If there are concerns or suspicions about potentially criminal behaviour this should include referral to the police.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/young-people/consent-sharing-photos-videos>

[Sporting organisations, clubs and community groups | eSafety Commissioner](#)

<https://playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/community-child-safe-sport/privacy-and-images>

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