

MID-ISLAND GYM SPORTS

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Effective Date: 19/10/2022

Review Date October 2023

All children and young people have the right to participate in play, active recreation and sport in an environment that promotes their wellbeing and protects them from harm and abuse.

Mid-Island Gym is committed to having an embedded culture of child protection in place and that promotes the wellbeing and safety of all the children and young people who participate in our programs or make use of the facility.

This Child Protection Policy applies to:

- Any person employed directly by Mid-Island Gym Sports, or any person who is engaged with children or young people through their position at Mid-Island Gym Sports (paid or volunteers). (The word staff is most frequently used to refer to the above for brevity in this policy).
- Committee members
- Contractors and Visitors

The Mid-Island Gym Sports Child Protection Policy is guided by the *Children's Act 2014, the Children's Action Plan & Vulnerable Children Act 2014 and the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, Version as at 1 September 2022.*

This Child Protection policy also relates to and is supported by *Sports New Zealand and Gymnastics New Zealand* Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures.

Definitions:

- Child protection - is the safeguarding of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect.
- A child or young person is defined as any person under the age of 18 years of age.
- An adult with a disability can be regarded as a 'vulnerable adult' and may therefore also be covered by this policy.
- Disclosure – information given to a person, by a child, parent or caregiver, or a third party, in relation to abuse or neglect.

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Purpose:

Mid-Island Gym Sports is committed to providing an environment where:

- The safety and wellbeing of children/young people is made a priority and considered in all aspects of our organisation.
- All staff and volunteers are provided training, support and guidance on how to recognize and respond to reports of child abuse or concerning behaviours that put children at risk.
- Reported concerns are referred to appropriate child protection agencies and authorities.
- There is a designated Child Safeguarding Representative (CSR) or Child Protection Officer (CPO).
- All children are protected regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.
- There is a Safeguarding Culture through policy, procedures and a Code of Conduct for all staff and volunteers.
- There is a culture where everyone feels confident to challenge poor practice and raise issues of concern.
- Staff are given the opportunity to be trusted points of contact and positive role models for children and young people at our facility.
- Compliance with applicable, current legislation and best practice is implemented.
- There is an ongoing sharing of educational information that promotes child protection and safeguarding with children, parents and staff.

Training

Mid-Island Gym Sports is committed to maintaining and increasing staff awareness of how to prevent, recognize and respond to abuse and neglect through having clear policies and procedures in place as well as appropriate training.

- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary police checks are completed before starting work with children and young people.
- Providing effective management of new staff through induction, supervision, support and training.
- Ensure staff have the training and support they need so they can effectively respond and report concerns.
- Educate staff in Child Protection upon induction and every two years as currently recommended.

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Procedures for Identifying and Reporting child abuse and neglect

Mid-Island Gym Sports approach to identifying and reporting abuse or neglect is guided by the following principles:

- Abuse can be emotional, physical, sexual or neglectful. It is important to consider the overall wellbeing and the risk of harm to the child. It is not so important to be able to categorize the type of abuse or neglect.
- If any staff members are aware of, or have concerns, about a young person being abused or neglected at Mid-Island Gym Sports, whether it is onsite or at a competition or event where they are representing Mid-Island Gym Sports, you need to notify the Safeguarding Representative.
- The Safeguarding representative and staff member will get advice from the police and/or Oranga Tamariki, and if appropriate they will send a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki.
- Anyone can make a report of concern. Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, Children’s and Young People’s Well-being Act 1989, any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki or the Police, and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceeding may be brought against them.
- When any concerning behaviour is disclosed to you or you suspected a child is being abused, write down your observations and any communications that have taken place.
- It is **not** your responsibility to investigate what has been disclosed or shared with you.
- The Safeguarding Representative and member of staff will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before taking any other action, including who needs to be notified.
- The Chairperson of the Committee and Centre manager will need to be notified if the police have or are going to be contacted and/or a report of concern is going to be made to Oranga Tamariki. The Chairperson will need to notify the committee by way of a special “in committee” meeting.
- Please refer to **Appendix B** – for when concerns or allegations are made against an employee or member of staff
- The safeguarding representative and anyone acting on behalf of Mid-Island Gym Sports, in any capacity, is expected to always act on the advice of the Police and/or Oranga Tamariki when responding to disclosures of child abuse or risk of harm.
- Please refer to **Appendix A** for flow chart
- Refer to **Appendix C** for Report of Concern Form

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Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- Anyone can disclose any concerning information they have. The Privacy Act allows reporting of abuse or suspected abuse. So does the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act.
- At Mid-Island Gym Sports any sensitive or confidential information in a report of concern or police report, will be kept separate from other administrative and committee records. Confidential information pertaining to the police report or Report of Concern will be managed by the Safeguarding Representative and filed in a confidential safeguarding register which will be managed by the safeguarding representative.
- Details of the report of concern, and any information pertaining to a police investigation, concerning a staff member (paid or volunteer), needs to be shared with Gymnastic New Zealand (GNZ). The sharing of this information will be done in alignment with Mid-Island Gym Sports and Gymnastic New Zealand Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures. Mid-Island Gym Sports and Gymnastic New Zealand may also deem that this information may need to be shared with The Sport and Recreation Complaints and Mediation Service.

Procedures that promote safeguarding children and young people at Mid-Island Gym Sports includes:

- Following the Code of Conduct and making the child's safety and wellbeing a priority at all times.
- Staff avoiding being alone with a child or young person.
- Maintain an open-door policy for all spaces, except in toilets and changerooms.
- Staff being required to use a separate toilet and change room.
- Any individual contact, without another adult present, needs to be reasonable and justifiable; and unless it is an emergency, it needs to be planned and consented to by the child's parents/caregivers and the Centre Manager.

Physical Contact

- Gymnastics is a sport that requires a certain level of physical contact during training to learn or support a skill, as well as being necessary at times for safety reasons.
- All physical contact will be done in a manner that is respectful and consensual.
- At no stage should any physical contact with a child/young person cause pain, distress or harm.
- The young person has the right to decline being touched and their training adapted to accommodate this.

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Procedures for Day Trips, After Hour Activities, Competitions, etc.

- Staff and volunteers remain in a position of trust when they are representing the Mid-Island Gym Sports at events, competitions or trips outside the club. At all times staff and volunteers are required to ensure that their behaviour follows the Mid-Island Gym Sports Code of Conduct when interacting with children and young people and that the young person's safety and wellbeing is made a priority at all times.
- Caregiver/parents must be informed of any plans that are made, prior to any trips away. Parental/caregiver consent needs to be obtained.
- Trips, outings or overnight stays that involve staff or volunteers supervising children must ensure that the safe staff/adult/child ratios are adhered to, and gender mix is considered.

Transporting Children and Young People

- There may be times when staff or volunteers may need to transport children as part of their duties. Parental consent needs to be obtained for all planned trips.
- Staff or volunteers who use their own vehicles for transporting children need to ensure that they have a full license and that their vehicle is registered, has a current warrant of fitness, and that there are seatbelts for everyone in the vehicle.
- When required it is advisable that staff member travel with another adult, or in a group. If they have to be alone with a young person, it is recommended that the young person travels in the back seat.
- There may be occasions where the child or young person requires being transported alone, such as in an emergency situation or where *not* transporting a child may place the child at risk. In such circumstances the safety and wellbeing of the child must be made a priority. In such circumstances this must be recorded and reported to the Centre Manager as soon as possible and parents/caregivers need to be informed in a timely manner.
- Ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of transportation are recorded and are justified.
- Remember that when transporting children, the safety and wellbeing of those children remain your responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent or caregiver.

Communicating with Children/Young people – Refer to the Communication and Social Media Policy

SEE APPENDIX A below for Flow Chart

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Links for further information:

<https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/child-safeguarding-policies-and-procedures/>

<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0040/latest/whole.html>

<https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/worried-about-a-child-tell-us/>

<https://www.police.govt.nz/faq/i-suspect-a-child-is-being-abused-what-should-i-do>

<https://www.police.govt.nz/advice-services/personal-community-safety/school-portal/resources/successful-relationships/about-abuse>

<https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/abuse>

<https://www.privacy.org.nz/privacy-act-2020/privacy-principles/>

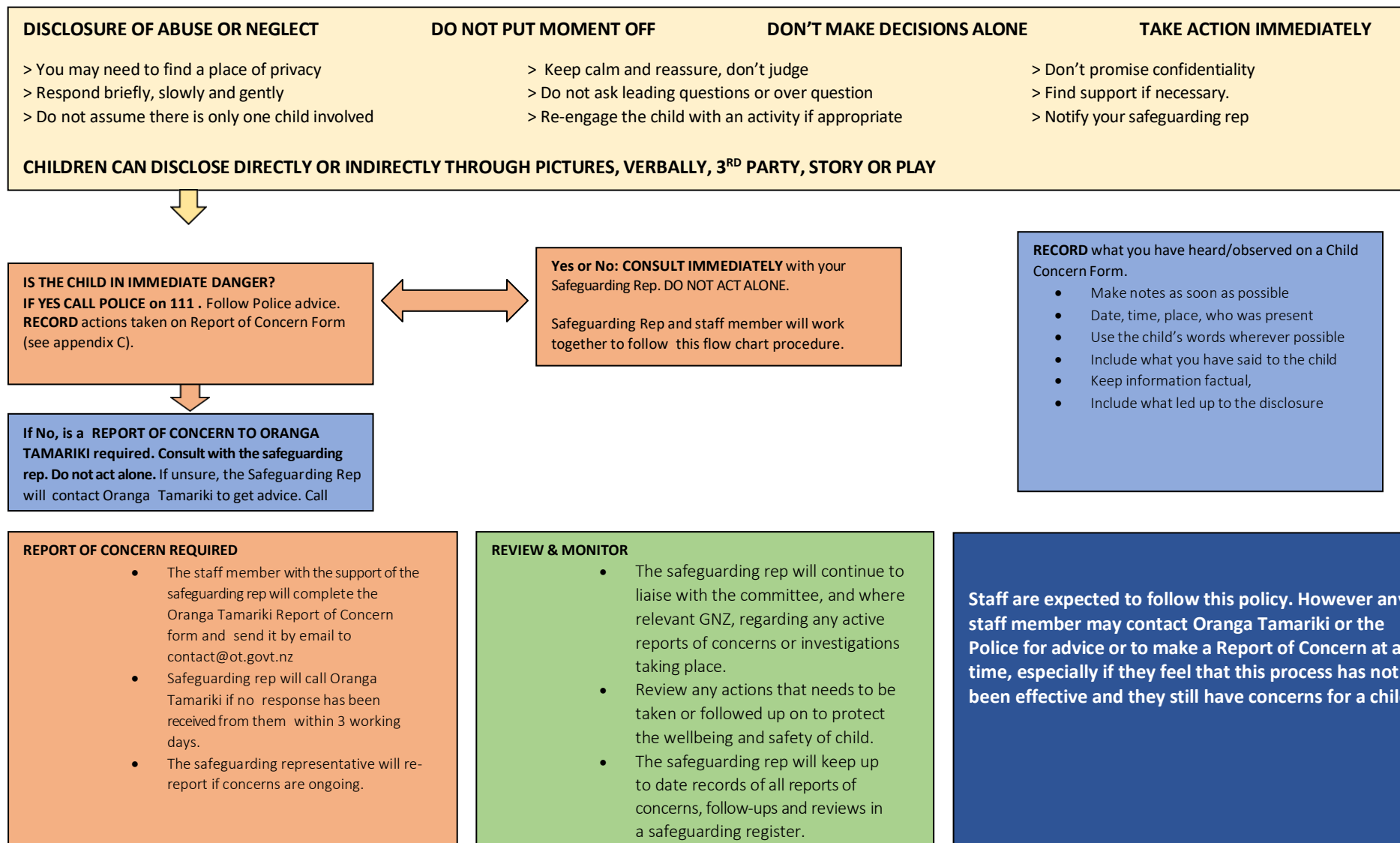
<https://www.gymnasticsnz.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/1-Gymnastics-NZ-Safeguarding-and-Child-Protection-Policy-final-for-board-25.01.21.pdf>

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Appendix A – Procedure when disclosure of abuse or neglect is made:



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Appendix B – Procedure when allegations are made an employee or member of staff.

In all cases the child's safety is a priority. Under no circumstances should the child raising the concern or making the allegation be exposed to unnecessary risk.

The Safeguarding Representative/Child protection officer, and Committee, hereby referred to as Management, needs to be notified immediately if an allegation of abuse or neglect is made against any person employed directly by Mid-Island Gym Sports, or working on behalf of Mid-Island Gym Ports (paid or volunteers).

When a disclosure or allegation is made regarding a staff member, the Child Safeguarding Representative will provide support to the child/young person and the person making the allegation, if this is not the same individual. The Chair of the Committee or a Committee representative will act on behalf of the organisation with employment matters relating to that staff member. The same person must not fulfil both these roles.

The decision to investigate an allegation of abuse or neglect against an employee will be made by Oranga Tamariki and/or the New Zealand Police. It is not your responsibility to investigate. It is important that any actions taken by Mid-Island Gym Sports do not undermine or frustrate any investigations being conducted by an external agency. Management needs to maintain a close liaison with Oranga Tamariki and the NZ Police to achieve this.

Precautionary safeguarding measures may need to be taken while advice is being sought and/or the concern/allegation is under investigation by the authorised authorities and/or statutory agencies involved. All safeguarding actions taken need to be done in the interests of protecting *all* of those involved.

The Committee must ensure that they:

1. Refer to the relevant employment contract and follow existing employment laws.
2. Advise the employee of the concerns and seek a response. This action should be guided by the outcome of discussions and advice obtained from the statutory agencies.
3. The Employee will be advised of their right to seek support/advice from appropriate representatives.
4. Management may need to consider the removal of employee from the program or environment, subject to the impending investigation or advice received from the Police/Oranga Tamariki.
5. Details of the report of concern, and any information pertaining to a police investigation, concerning a staff member (paid or volunteer), needs to be shared with Gymnastic New Zealand (GNZ). The sharing of this information will be done in alignment with Mid-Island Gym Sports and Gymnastic New Zealand Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures. Mid-Island Gym Sports and Gymnastic New Zealand may also deem that this information may need to be shared with the Sport and Recreation Complaints and Mediation Service.

No Settlement Agreements

Mid-Island Gym Sorts will not enter into settlement agreements where the safety and protection of children and young people are a concern; such a settlement agreement contradicts a culture of safeguarding and child protection at Mid-Island Gym Sports.

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Appendix C – Report of Concern Form

The purpose of this form is to capture your concerns about the child/young person. The form is to be completed by staff or volunteers as soon as concerns are raised. It is not your role to investigate concerns. Completed forms are to be shared with your Child Safeguarding Representative (CSR) within one working day.

Name of Child _____

Date of Birth ___/___/___

Address _____

Contact Number(s) _____

Names of Parents/Caregivers _____

Names and details of Adult of Concern _____

Details of the concern (provide as much detail as possible) _____

Details of questions asked of child and the child's response (please provide additional pages) _____

Safeguarding steps already taken _____

Have you contacted the family? If not, why? _____

Your job title _____

Relationship to child _____

Your organisation _____

Your contact number and email address _____

Please include any and all information you think may be relevant to this report of concern. Please add additional pages if more information is needed.

Anyone who is worried about a child or young person can make a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki or the Police. If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call: POLICE on 111 Oranga Tamariki call freephone: 0508 326 459 or email us at contact@ot.govt.nz

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(Updates to this policy can be made before the scheduled review date in order to comply with any new laws or regulations).