

Interacting with Children Guidelines



Western Australia Airsoft and Gel Ball Club Inc.

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Part 1. Introduction

These guidelines are for Western Australia Airsoft and Gel Ball Club Inc. (WAAGBC) staff and affiliated personnel to protect them from risk and to keep children safe. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18.

Under Section 6 of the *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004* people are in child-related work and require a Working with Children (WWC) Check only if the usual duties of the work involve, or are likely to involve, contact with a child in connection with a club, association or movement (including of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature and whether incorporated or not) with a significant membership or involvement of children, but not including an informal arrangement entered into for private or domestic purposes.

In accordance with Section 8A of the *Weapons Act 1999*, a child under the age of 18 is not allowed to own controlled weapons such as imitation firearms (i.e. gel blasters or airsoft devices), however are allowed to use them in the conduct of a sporting activity. Therefore, the interactions WAAGBC staff may have with children would be very limited as they only represent a very small minority of WAAGBC members and / or sport enthusiasts. A Working with Children (WWC) Check is considered not being required for WAAGBC staff and affiliated personnel; however, we encourage such personnel to obtain one and WAAGBC will provide the necessary support.

Furthermore, on the rare occasions when interaction with children takes place, the following shall be followed.

Part 2. Guidelines for Interacting with Children

Maintain appropriate boundaries

WAAGBC staff and other affiliated personnel in positions of authority should maintain clear:

Physical boundaries

- Use drills to develop fitness, not as a punishment;
- Only use physical contact that is appropriate for the development of a particular skill and has the permission of the athlete / sport participant;
- Work within sight of others at all times.

Emotional boundaries

- Use positive feedback on performance, not negative feedback about the person;
- Be encouraging and avoid put-downs.

Social boundaries

- Attend sport related events such as sponsorship and fundraising events, celebrations and annual meetings but do not socialize with athletes outside sporting functions;
- Do not socialize with child athletes / sport participants via social media.

Sexual boundaries

- Do not have sexual relationships with athletes / sport participants you are coaching / supervising;
- Do not touch athletes / sport participants in ways likely to make them feel uncomfortable.

Minimize physical contact

Generally, physical contact with players or participants should be to:

- Develop sport skills;
- Give sports massage;
- Treat an injury;
- Prevent or respond to an injury;
- Meet the specific requirements of the sport.

All physical contact by personnel should fulfil the following criteria:

- Physical contact should be appropriate for the development of a sport skill/s;
- Permission from the player or participant should always be sought;
- Players or participants should be congratulated or comforted in public not in an isolated setting.

Avoid being alone with a child

To protect yourself and the child from risk:

- Do not isolate yourself and a child and avoid being alone with any particular child;
- If a child approaches you and wants to talk to you privately about a matter, do so in an open area and in sight of other adults (e.g. other coaches, officials, game organizers or parents/guardians);
- Before going into private areas / rooms knock or announce that you will be coming in. Try to have at least one adult with you in the room with children.