



German Shepherd Dog Club Victoria

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

PURPOSE

This document outlines how the German Shepherd Dog Club of Victoria (GSDCV) aims to meet its commitment to child safety and wellbeing. The Club is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

It is to ensure that all Management and Committee members, Officers, Instructors, Volunteers and members, are aware of the commitment and obligation to create a child safe organisation.

DEFINITIONS

Child means a child or young person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse means a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded, sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child or significant neglect of a child.

Child Safe Standards as made under section 17(1) of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to:

- All committee members and position holders
- Instructors
- Volunteers and Members
- Any person who has a role that brings them into contact with children under 18 years old.

PRINCIPLES/AIMS

All children under eighteen (18) years of age who are members of the GSDCV have a right to feel and be safe. The underpinning principles of this policy are:

The GSDCV aim for children to be:

- safe, happy and empowered
- supported and respected
- uphold the rights of children and young people who come into contact with members when they attend the Club or Club events so that they feel heard on matters relevant to their safety and so that they feel safe and protected, and
- provided a safe environment for, and consider the needs of, same sex attracted and intersex children and young people, and recognises gender diversity in providing a safe environment, and consider their needs in providing that environment.

The GSDCV requires all members to observe the '**GSDCV Code of Conduct for Child Safe Standards and Wellbeing**'.

We aim to Support Cultural Diversity and Disability by:

- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promoting and welcoming diversity and tolerance and people from all walks of life, and
- Ensuring that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

As a Child Safe Organisation we:

- Have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently
- Have a legal and moral obligation to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously
- Are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks
- Have a culture of child safety that is part of everyday practice
- Have strong leadership at the Management Committee driving a culture of child safety
- Have the safety of children as a prime consideration
- Actively encourages participation, empowerment and serves to protect children
- Have actively considered risks of abuse within the organisation
- Engages with children to create a child safe environment and empowers children to speak up if something is wrong
- Have inclusive approaches for children with a disability, aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- All nominated people must ensure that at all times they display appropriate standards of behaviour towards children and young people, ensuring their rights are respected, they feel safe and protected and their concerns are taken seriously.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The GSDCV has implemented a child safe framework aligned to legislative requirements in Victoria. This may include:

- Children, Youth and Family Act 2005
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.

NOMINATED CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

The GSDCV has appointed a Child Safety Officer being the designated person to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns and providing support to personnel.

This position provides a single contact for children, parents and personnel to seek advice and support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children.

The GSDCV Child Safety Officer is:

Dearne Jackson

Phone:

0413 278 042 Email: Secretary@gsdcv.org.au

PROCEDURES – for the management of allegations, concerns and complaints

The GSDCV takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Personnel are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

The GSDCV works to ensure all children, families and personnel know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour. The GSDCV understands it has a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if there is a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

Reporting Child Abuse

Reporting child abuse is a whole of Club responsibility. Reporting is compulsory. Child abuse includes any act committed against a child.

Reportable conduct includes:

- a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded, or
- sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a child, or
- physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child, or
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child, or
- significant neglect of a child.

Reporting

The GSDCV will not tolerate incidents of child abuse. All Management, Committee, position holders, Instructors and volunteers understand their obligation to notify relevant authorities if they have a reasonable suspicion that a minor has been, or is being, abused or neglected by a member of their family or any other individual and has procedures are in place for staff to follow if they have a concern about the safety of a child.

Assistance is also available from:

- Police – 000
- Child Protection – see website for relevant phone numbers
<https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>.
- Child Protection Emergency Service on 131278
- Child First or The Orange Door - <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>

Follow the Flow Chart **A guide to Reporting** at Attachment 1 when an instance of child abuse has been suspected.

What is a ‘reasonable belief’?

A ‘reasonable belief’ is not the same as having proof. A ‘reasonable belief’ is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

If a person is not sure who to call, or are needing assistance they are able to call Child Protection:

- North Division intake: [1300 664 977](tel:1300664977)
- South Division intake: [1300 655 795](tel:1300655795)
- East Division intake: [1300 360 391](tel:1300360391)
- West Division intake – metropolitan: [1300 664 977](tel:1300664977)

- West Division intake – rural and regional: [1800 075 599](tel:1800075599)

If a person believes a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, they should contact the Police immediately by dialling 000. An incident form must be filled in. The Form is Attachment 2.

GSDCV Procedure

Should an instance of suspected abuse come to the attention of a member of the club the following guidelines should be followed. Each situation is different. In considering the most effective response that will ensure the child's safety and wellbeing, you may need to gather information and facts. These could include:

- **Make notes** – record what you observe in pen. Date and sign the entry
- **Continue to observe** – record what you observe, and date and sign each entry
- **Consult colleagues** – get support and advice from your colleagues and supervisors. Compare notes and brainstorm possible strategies
- **Develop action plans based on procedures** – familiarise yourself with the club's procedures and processes about what to do
- **Talk to other agencies about helping the family** – collaborate with or engage family support services, community health services, local government services, Department of Health and Human Services and Child Protection contacts, and disability services. You may want to call a case conference for professionals to discuss their concerns.
- **Talk to the child** – do this with respect for the child's or young person's need for privacy and confidentiality. Comfort if you are able to. Listen to what the child tells you.
- **Talk to the parent or parents** – only if you believe it will not jeopardise the safety of the child or young person, or compromise a child protection or police investigation should this be required.

Privacy

The GSDCV will ensure all personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be personnel, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

All records will be securely stored.

Fair procedures for members of GSCDV

While the safety and wellbeing of children is the primary concern it is acknowledged that all people must also be treated in a fair and just manner. The decisions made by the GSDCV when recruiting volunteers for roles, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

Working With Children Checks (WWCC)

Members within the GSDCV who have the potential to work with children under the age of 18 years during the course of their roles may be required to hold a Victorian Working with Children Card.

It is the responsibility of each individual to register for and obtain the required check. Potential people with adverse findings in these checks undertaken at the time of commencing a volunteer role will not be offered a role in the GSDCV.

The GSDCV will maintain a register of those required to hold a Working with Children Check.

It is each person's responsibility to ensure their WWCC is renewed as required.

GSDCV Working With Children Check Position Requirement

The GSDCV Management Committee have deemed the following roles and positions (at a minimum) within the GSDCV be required to hold a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) card, as of 20 March 2023 (unless dated otherwise).

	Required	Not Required
Management Committee	Members of the GSDCV Management Committee and their proxies	Minute Secretary
Branch Committee	Branch Manager Assistant Branch manager Branch Secretary Branch Publicity Officer Branch Website Officer Branch Demo Team Manager	Branch Treasurer Breed Liaison Officer Membership Grounds Officer Equipment Officer Catering Officer Social Secretary General and other committee positions
Obedience Training Committee	Obedience Training Administrator Assistant Training Administrator Chief Instructors	Secretary(s) Trial Manager
Breed Affairs Committee	Breed Affairs Administrator Assistant Breed Affairs Administrator Show Manager	Branch Breed Liaison Officers Show Training Administrator Breed Surveyors Secretary(s)
Club Instructors	Instructors (<i>by 24 March 2024</i>) Trainees (<i>as of 1 January 2023</i>)	
Appointed Positions	Shepherd News Editor Webmaster Publicity Officer Demo Team Manager	Membership Officer Assistant Treasurer(s) Minute Secretary(s) Hip & Elbow Registrar Breed Survey Registrar Promotions Officer Puppy Listings Officer Rehoming Officer Character & Working Test Registrar
Show Committee	Show Secretary	General committee positions
Other Club Volunteer Roles	Social Media Officer (Branch) Branch Child Safety Person(s)	

Date last reviewed: September 2023

Next review date: September 2024

Responsible officer: GSDCV Child Safety Officer (Club Secretary) (0413 278 042) or email Secretary@gsdcv.org.au

A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST

Protective concerns

You are concerned about a child because you have:

- received a disclosure from a child about abuse or neglect
- observed indicators of abuse or neglect
- been made aware of possible harm via your involvement in the community external to your professional role.

At all times remember to:

- record your observations
- follow appropriate protocols
- consult notes and records
- consult with appropriate colleagues if necessary
- consult with other support agencies if necessary

STEP 1	RESPONDING TO CONCERNS	STEP 2	FORMING A BELIEF ON REASONABLE GROUNDS	STEP 3	MAKING A REFERRAL TO Child FIRST	STEP 4	MAKE A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If your concerns relate to a child in need of immediate protection; or you have formed a belief that a child is at significant risk of harm*. Go to Step 4 2. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services. Go to Step 3 3. In all other situations Go to Step 2. <p>* Refer to Appendix 2: Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm in the Protocol – <i>Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people</i></p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider the level of immediate danger to the child. Ask yourself: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have I formed a belief that the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm? YES / NO and b) Am I in doubt about the child's safety and the parent's ability to protect the child? YES / NO 2. If you answered yes to a) or b) Go to Step 4 3. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services. Go to Step 3 		Child Wellbeing Referral <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact your local Child FIRST provider. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See over for contact list for local Child FIRST phone numbers. 2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details. 		Mandatory/Protective Report* <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact your local Child Protection Intake provider immediately. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See over for contact list for local Child Protection phone numbers. • For After Hours Child Protection Emergency Services, call 131 278. 2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details. <p>* Non-mandated staff members who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection are able to report their concerns to Child Protection</p>

For further information refer to *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people – A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools*

Contact Numbers

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Eastern	(03) 9265 2400
Northern	(03) 9488 9488
Western	(03) 9291 6500
Southern	(03) 9794 3555
RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000
Gippsland	5127 0400
Grampians	5337 8444
Hume	5761 2100
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111

Office for Children and Licensed Children's Services:

METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Eastern	(03) 9265 2400
Northern	(03) 9412 5333
Western	(03) 9275 7000
Southern	(03) 9096 9555
RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000
Gippsland	5127 0400
Grampians	5337 8444
Hume	5761 2100
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111

Important information for government schools

Principals of Victorian Government schools must report all incidents to the Emergency and Security Management Unit on **03 9589 6266**.

Victorian Government schools should contact the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit (SCIAU), Student Wellbeing Division, for advice and support when responding to allegations of student sexual assault or inappropriate sexual behaviours.

The SCIAU can be contacted on **03 9637 2934** or **03 9637 2487**.

Victorian Government School Principals should refer to the flowchart – *Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Assault Compulsory Actions for Principals* at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/childprotection/childprotection.htm>

Department of Human Services Child Protection

METROPOLITAN REGIONS		METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Intake Unit		Regional Office	
Eastern	1300 360 391	Box Hill	(03) 9843 6000
North and West	1300 664 977	Preston	1300 664 977
		Footscray	1300 360 462
Southern	1300 655 795	Dandenong	(03) 9213 2111

RURAL REGIONS			
Intake Unit		Regional Office	
Barwon South Western			
	1800 075 599	Geelong	(03) 5226 4540
Gippsland	1800 020 202	Traralgon	(03) 5177 2500
Grampians	1800 000 551	Ballarat	(03) 5333 6530
Hume	1800 650 227	Wangaratta	(03) 5722 0555
		Wodonga	(02) 6055 7777
Loddon Mallee	1800 675 598	Bendigo	(03) 5434 5555

After hours Child Protection Emergency Services (AHCPEs)

Statewide number for all emergency child protection matters outside of normal business hours (24 hours, 7 days a week): **131 278**

Victoria Police 000

Catholic Education Offices

Catholic Education Office, Melbourne	(03) 9267 0228
Catholic Education Office, Ballarat Diocese	5337 7135
Catholic Education Office, Sale Diocese	5622 6600
Catholic Education Office, Sandhurst Diocese	5443 2377

Independent Schools Victoria (03) 9825 7200

Other

Victorian Aboriginal Education Association, Inc.	(03) 9481 0800
Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit	(03) 9247 6666
Centre Against Sexual Assault	1800 806 292
Gatehouse Centre, Royal Children's Hospital (for specialist counselling and medical assistance)	(03) 9345 6391
Child Safety Commissioner	(03) 8601 5884
Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency	(03) 8388 1855

CHILD FIRST

Local Catchment Area	Contact
Barwon South Western	Greater Geelong, Queenscliff, Surf Coast
	Colac – Otway, Corangamite
	Warrnambool, Moyne, Glenelg, Southern Grampians
	1300 551 948
Gippsland	East Gippsland
	Wellington
	La Trobe, Baw Baw
	South Gippsland, Bass Coast
Grampians	Northern Grampians, West
	Wimmera, Hindmarsh, Yarrambat, Horsham
	1800 195 114
	1800 195 114
Hume	Ararat, Pyrenees, Hepburn, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Moorabool
	1300 783 341
	Wodonga, Towong, Indigo
	1800 705 211
Loddon Mallee	Alpine, Benalla, Mansfield, Wangaratta
	1800 705 211
	Greater Shepparton, Strathbogie, Moira
	1300 854 944
Eastern Metropolitan	Mitchell, Murrindindi
	1800 663 107
	Greater Bendigo, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander
	1800 260 338
North and West Metropolitan	Buloke, Goonawarra, Swan Hill, Mildura
	1800 625 533
	1800 MALLEE
	Yarra Ranges, Knox, Maroondah
Southern Metropolitan	Monash, Whitehorse, Manningham, Booroondarra
	1300 369 146
	Nillumbik, Whittlesea, Banyule, Yarra and Darebin
	1300 762 125
Other	Brimbank, Melton
	(03) 9450 0955
	Hume, Moreland
	1300 138 180
Other	Hobson's Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Wyndham
	1300 786 433
	Casey, Cardinia, Greater Dandenong
	1300 786 433
Other	Aboriginal children and families (Casey, Cardinia and Great Dandenong)
	(03) 9705 3939
	Frankston, Mornington Peninsula
	(03) 9794 5973
Other	Kingston, Bayside, Glen Eira, Stonington, Port Phillip
	1300 721 383
	1300 367 441

<h1 style="text-align: center; color: blue;">Incident Reporting Form</h1>		GSDCV
Name/s of the person or people involved in the incident:		
Description of the incident		
Date incident occurred:		
Time incident occurred:		
Location where incident occurred:		
Immediate action taken:		
If no action taken provide reason:		
Name of person completing this form:		
Contact telephone number:		
Signature:		
Date		
Time		
Authority disclosure reported to (eg Police/Child Safety Centre)		
Name of person reported to:		