

# Injury Prevention & Positive Sports Conduct Policy

## PURPOSE

The following injury prevention policy has been developed by Reach Gymnastics.

Sports-related injury is a major component of accidental injury in Victoria. It is second only to road traffic injuries in terms of years lost to disability and direct hospital costs. For children under 15 years, sports-related injuries now represent four times the public health burden when compared to road trauma related costs.

The Sports Injury Prevention Taskforce has estimated that each year in Victoria approximately 4,500 people drop out from participation in five of the top team based sports due to sports injuries.

Our club is committed to providing a safe environment for participation. Aggressive, threatening or other inappropriate behaviour by members, their families, their friends, and other sporting personnel while attending training or event will not be tolerated.

Positive attitudes and conduct make sport enjoyable for everyone. Some people can ruin the experience with poor behaviour.

This can include things like undue pressure, abuse, taunting, poor sportsmanship, foul language and more. It can be verbal, written, physical or emotional.

Poor behaviour can occur in many places - during play, on the sidelines, at training or in the clubhouse.

It can be coaches, gymnasts, parents, spectators, officials or administrators that behave poorly. Any one of these people, children or adults, can be the victim of poor conduct too.

This policy aims to address both the prevention of people at the club acquiring an injury and any impacts from negative sports conduct.

## Definitions:

**Positive sports conduct** = the behaviours appropriate of a sport participant. Sportsmanship occurs when athletes show respect and concern to opponents, teammates,

coaches, and officials. In other words, coaches should teach their athletes to "treat others, as you would like to be treated."

**Injury Prevention** = removing or reducing people's exposure to injury causes.

**Anti-social behaviour** = acts that create community concern with a disregard for community safety, such as fighting.

**Safe and secure environment** = A safe and secure environment is one in which the population has the freedom to pursue daily activities without fear to their safety.

## WHO IS AFFECTED BY THE POLICY?

The policy applies to all members, administrators, officials, coaches, gymnasts, spectators, visitors and volunteers of the Reach Gymnastics.

## TIMING

The policy is effective from 23/10/2019.

## THE ENVIRONMENT

The weather is assessed before beginning an activity and an appropriate decision is made regarding whether participation by the club should go ahead.

Regular fluid intake is encouraged by the sports club during training and events.

Under no circumstances should children be compelled to keep playing if they feel unwell in the heat.

## EQUIPMENT

The use of appropriate and properly fitted equipment is essential to reduce the risk of injuries. All equipment used should meet the Australian Standards and be:

- suited to the size and ability of the participant
- regularly checked and maintained
- replaced when inadequate for its purpose
- sufficient in number
- padded as appropriate
- properly erected/constructed
- used by senior members and other role models as an example of good safety to juniors

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- required at all times - training as well as competition
- easily and safely lifted or moved to the field of play
- sport specific.

Some commonly used protective equipment used at our club can include:

- strapping and taping.

## FACILITIES

Facilities should be regularly checked by an appropriate person (club/association representative, local council, official, coach, parent) to ensure they are safe to use. This should include checking that:

- all rubbish is cleared away, especially broken glass, stones and rip top lids from bottles and cans
- change rooms, toilets, showers and first aid treatment areas are clean and hygienic
- spectators, unnecessary equipment and vehicles are kept well back from the sidelines
- lighting is adequate
- matting is adequate where necessary.

Make sure all identified hazards are removed or fixed before facilities are used.

Use a comprehensive, written checklist to ensure that whoever is doing the inspection knows what to look for and whoever is fixing the problem knows what needs to be done.

The facilities can be accessed by Emergency vehicles at all times.

## RECORDS

Types of information that may be collected include athlete medical forms and asthma management plans.

As important as collection and sharing of participant information is, it is also just as important that the privacy of the participant's information is respected, that the participant is aware of who will have access to their information and, that access complies with privacy laws.

Emergency contact details are up to date and stored securely for confidentiality, but able to be accessed if needed at training and all planned events.

## ILLNESS AND PARTICIPATION

When assessing whether a child should participate in physical activity remember:

- the child should not participate if the symptoms are general (e.g. temperature, aches, pains, general muscular tiredness)
- for uncomplicated upper respiratory tract symptoms, such as a runny nose or sneezing, the child should be allowed to participate for 10-15 minutes. The child's condition should then be reassessed, and if they feel unwell, or are obviously struggling to keep up, then they should not continue to participate in that session.

## WARM UP, COOL DOWN AND STRETCH

The club should all warm up, cool down and stretch to prevent injury, at all events with activities, including training.

The warm up aims to:

- prepare the mind and body for the activity
- increase body temperature
- increase heart rate
- increase breathing rate.

The warm up should include activities that use the same movement patterns as the activities to be performed during the session. Warm up exercises should begin at a low intensity and gradually increase to the level required in the activity.

Participants should do a cool down routine at the end of every activity session, consisting of:

- activity of significantly reduced intensity, such as 2-3 minutes of easy jogging or walking
- 5 minutes of gentle, dynamic stretching exercises.

Stretching activities should move the muscles through the full range of movement and include all muscle groups that will be used in the activities to come.

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## INJURY REPORTING & MANAGEMENT

Gather information about who gets injured and how, using incident reports.

If an injury occurs the golden rule in managing it is “do no further damage”. Inadequate or inappropriate first aid may aggravate the injury and cause an increase in the time necessary before returning to participation. It is important that the injured participant is assessed and managed by an appropriately qualified person such as a sports first aider or sports trainer.

Immediate management approaches include DRABCD (checking Danger, Response, Airway, Breathing, Compression and Defibrillation) RICER NO HARM (when an injury is sustained apply Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation, Referral and NO Heat, Alcohol, Running or Massage).

Before returning to participation the participant should be able to answer yes to the following questions:

- Is the injured area pain free?
- Can you move the injured part easily through a full range of movement? (i.e. compared to the participant’s non-injured side)
- Has the injured area fully regained its strength?

Whilst serious head injuries are uncommon in children and young peoples’ sport, participants who have lost consciousness or who are suspected of being concussed must be removed from the activity, taking no further part until cleared by a doctor.

Be aware of and support the sport’s injury management plans and return to play guidelines.

## COMMUNICATION WITH THE CLUB

Regularly and effectively communicate safety information (in newsletters, at meetings and on notice boards).

Injury prevention and management and positive sports conduct information and messaging is promoted at and around the club.

Ensure safety is included as a regular agenda item at management meetings.

Ensure parents, coaches, teachers, safety personnel and sponsors adhere to agreed codes of behaviour and understand their responsibilities.

Provide information and education to all involved to raise awareness and educate about safe practices and injury prevention.

## FIRST AID/SAFETY INJURY MANAGEMENT OFFICERS

Your club has an updated and well maintained first aid kit, defibrillator and fire safety kit available and visible for use by all club members at training and at all planned events.

Appropriately qualified First Aid/Safety Injury Management Officers attend training and are incorporated into all planned events.

Provide education and training for safety personnel (such as first aider, safety injury management officers).

## SUPPORTING THE CLUB

Officials, members, gymnasts and families are supported to raise and address non compliance.

Club leaders role model and champion appropriate behaviour, including injury prevention and positive sports conduct behaviour in accordance to the [fair play code](#).

## POSITIVE COACH CONDUCT

Help each person (athlete, official, etc) to reach their potential.

Not push gymnasts to continue playing sport/training after acquiring an injury while playing the sport. Gymnasts should not feel bullied or harassed to come back to training or playing a sport earlier than needed for an injury to heal.

Respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each person and encourage them with positive and constructive feedback.

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Encourage and support opportunities for people to learn appropriate behaviours and skills.

Support opportunities for participation in all aspects of the sport.

Treat each participant as an individual.

Obtain appropriate qualifications and keep up-to-date with the latest coaching practices and the principles of growth and development of participants.

Act within the rules and spirit of your sport. Promote fair play over winning at any cost. Respect the decisions of officials, coaches and administrators. Show respect and courtesy to all involved with the sport. Act with integrity and objectivity, and accept responsibility for your decisions and actions. Ensure your decisions and actions contribute to a harassment-free environment.

## **SPECTATOR/GYMNAST BEHAVIOUR**

Help create a positive atmosphere for gymnasts, officials and other spectators by showing respect for other gymnasts, officials and other spectators.

All gymnasts from our other teams within the club or other teams from outsider clubs should be treated fairly with respect. No on field or off field violence will be tolerated and possible sanctions may be taken with individuals who portray violent tendencies.

Refrain from using bad language, harassing or ridiculing others or behaving in a threatening or violent manner.

If you are aware of inappropriate spectator/gymnast behaviour and you feel confident to do so, speak with the person and ask them to stop. If there is a manager present, ask for their assistance.

Report any inappropriate spectator/gymnast behaviour to the manager or someone in a position of authority.

Call the police or a club official if you are concerned for your safety or the safety of others.

To support spectators/gymnasts at the club, the club will:

Reinforce messages of fair and respectful behaviour by displaying signs and posters around our facilities and providing information on our website, in our newsletter and through other club communication.

Encourage our coaches and officials to complete training to develop their skills and confidence.

Consult with our local police and seek their support and advice on how to handle issues involving inappropriate behaviour by spectators/gymnasts prior to, at or after an event.

Encourage the reporting of incidents and investigate inappropriate behaviours as outlined in this policy and take disciplinary or whatever other actions as are deemed necessary (e.g. appoint a ground official to monitor behaviour).

Encourage our gymnasts, coaches, officials and spectators to call the police if they are concerned about escalating behaviour and their safety or the safety of others.

## **FOLLOWING THE POLICY**

Club members or others found to have behaved inappropriately, and who are associate members or have agreed to abide by this policy, may face disciplinary action.

Possible sanctions that may be taken include:

- a direction that the individual make verbal and/or written apology;
- counselling of the individual to address behaviour;
- withdrawal of any awards, placings, records, achievements bestowed in any tournaments, activities or events held or sanctioned by our club;
- suspension or termination of membership, participation or engagement in a role or activity;

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- de-registration of accreditation for a period of time or permanently;
- a fine; or
- any other form of discipline that our club considers reasonable and appropriate.

## POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed **annually**.

This will ensure that the policy remains current and practical.