

Code of Conduct for Dealing with Children and Young People

The Victorian Athletic League (VAL) wants **Children and Young People** in our sport to feel safe, included, encouraged and supported – essentially, to enjoy themselves so that they keep participating.

To make sure that we create this environment, this Code of Conduct requires everyone involved as an employee or volunteer, in the VAL to abide by certain behavioural standards when dealing with **Children & Young People**.

VAL employee & volunteer code of conduct for dealing with Children & Young People:	
1	<p>Language and Tone of Voice:</p> <p>a) Should provide clear direction, encourage and affirm Children & Young People and boost their confidence.</p> <p>b) Should NOT be harmful – i.e., derogatory (e.g., “you’re a loser”), threatening, frightening, profane, discriminatory, racist, sexual.</p>
2	<p>Adhering to professional or volunteer role boundaries:</p> <p>a) Act only within the confines of your duties/role (e.g., if you’re a coach, just be a coach).</p> <p>b) Unless with express consent from the VAL EO do NOT provide unauthorised transportation to Children and Young People.</p> <p>ii. Engage in activities or seek contact with Children and Young People outside of the VAL.</p> <p>iii. Involve yourself in Children & Young People of the VAL’s private and/or family matters, unless you reasonably believe or suspect that they are at risk of harm.</p> <p>iv. Provide support to Children & Young People or their families that is unrelated to the VAL.</p> <p>v. Accept an invitation to attend any private social function at the request of Children & Young People or their family/carer in VAL (current or past) unless there was an existing social, personal or family relationship.</p>
3	<p>Sending electronic communications to Children & Young People (emails, texts and other direct messages):</p> <p>a) Must copy parent(s)/guardian(s) into any text, email, Facebook or any other form of electronic communication message.</p> <p>b) Must only communicate with Children & Young People regarding issues relevant to the VAL.</p> <p>c) Ensure that any messages are polite/friendly and in no way sexual in nature.</p> <p>d) Must not communicate with Children & Young People, request to be “friends” or “follow” Children & Young People using Internet chat rooms, social networking sites, game sites, instant messaging or anything of a similar nature, particularly to encourage social contact of an unauthorised nature.</p> <p>e) Must not request that Children & Young People keep communication a secret.</p>
4	<p>Supervision of Children & Young People at VAL:</p> <p>a) Avoid unsupervised situations with Children & Young People wherever possible - you should always be in view of others.</p> <p>b) Engage positively with our sport.</p> <p>c) Behave appropriately towards one another.</p> <p>d) Ensure that you are in a safe environment, protected from external threats.</p>
5	<p>Physical Contact with Children & Young People – must be appropriate to delivery of VAL and based on the needs of the Children & Young People (i.e., to comfort if distressed).</p> <p>Contact must not:</p> <p>a) Involve touching genitals, breasts or buttocks.</p> <p>b) Appear to have a sexual connotation.</p> <p>c) Be intended to cause pain or distress.</p> <p>d) Be overly physical (e.g., wrestling, tickling, etc).</p> <p>e) Be unnecessary (e.g., assisting a Child or Young Person with toileting when they don’t need help).</p> <p>f) Be initiated against the wishes of Child or Young Person (unless to prevent injury, in which case physical restraint should be a last resort).</p> <p>Physical contact initiated by Children and Young People that is sexual and/or inappropriate behaviour between Children and Young People must be reported to the VAL Executive Officer.</p>
6	<p>Sexual Misconduct:</p> <p>No form of “sexual behaviour” is to occur between, with or in the presence of Children & Young People at VAL events, even if the Child or Young Person are above the legal age of consent – 16 years during a VAL event. This includes contact and non-contact behaviour (e.g., flirting, sexual innuendo, electronic messaging or photography).</p>
7	<p>Positive Guidance and Discipline:</p> <p>We want to create a positive environment for everyone in the VAL, understanding that Children & Young People need to understand the acceptable limits of their behaviour, whilst ensuring that:</p> <p>a) We give Children & Young People clear direction.</p>

	<p>b) Children & Young People are given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive way. c) Behaviour management strategies are fair, respectful and appropriate to Children & Young People's developmental stage. d) No physical punishment, cruel/degrading/humiliating, etc treatment is used.</p> <p>Under no circumstances is physical punishment to be used, nor any other treatment that could be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening, humiliating or discriminatory.</p>
8	<p>Giving gifts to Children & Young People: Must always be authorised by their parents/guardians.</p>
9	<p>Photographs/video footage of Children & Young People: a) You may only take photographs or video footage of Children & Young People involved in the VAL if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. prior approval has granted by their parent(s)/guardian(s) typically during the registration process; ii. the context of the photo/footage is directly related to the VAL; iii. Children & Young People are appropriately dressed and posed; and iv. the image/footage is taken in presence of others involved in the VAL. <p>b) Images must not be distributed to anyone outside of the VAL without knowledge and approval of a parent/guardian and the VAL Executive Officer. c) Images must not be exhibited online without parent/guardian approval unless Children & Young People are de-identified.</p>
10	<p>Overnight Stays and Sleeping Arrangements for Children & Young People: Overnight stays relating to VAL activity are to only occur with the prior written authorisation of parents/guardians.</p>
11	<p>Change Room arrangements: People involved in the VAL must: a) Supervise Children & Young People in change rooms whilst balancing their right for privacy. b) Avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with Children & Young People in a change room area (other than with their own child), whilst ensuring adequate supervision to keep Children & Young People safe (e.g., standing outside the entrance to the change room). c) Not dress/undress in the change room whilst Children & Young People are present. d) Ensure that photos, video or other recordings are not taken in change rooms. e) Ensure that participants use the change room of their affirmed gender.</p>
1	<p>Use, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs: (a) All persons involved in the VAL who are volunteering at or delivering a VAL event involving Children & Young People must not use, possess or be under the influence of illegal or illicit drugs, alcohol or be incapacitated by any other legal drug. (b) Legal (i.e., prescription) drugs are permitted to be used as prescribed provided that they do not interfere with your ability to provide an appropriate level of care to Children & Young People and that you do not supply legal drugs (including alcohol and tobacco) to Children & Young People.</p>
13	<p>Transporting children: (a) You can only transport Children & Young People in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of our sport and only with prior written approval of Children & Young People's parent/guardian. (b) If it is not possible to get prior consent or approval, you must notify in writing the details of the travel to the VAL EO Officer as possible after the journey (primarily in emergency situations). (c) Where it is not possible to get a parent/guardian's approval in advance, the parent/guardian should send an approval in writing via text/electronic message. This should then be kept to ensure the permission was received.</p>
14	<p>Pick up and collection of Children & Young People: (a) As the VAL regulations require all members aged U18 to have parent or guardian in attendance, there should be no instances where Children & Young People are left unattended for pick up and collection. (b) If such an instance does occur, VAL personal (more than 1) should remain with the Children & Young People until they are collected by the appropriate parent or guardian.</p>

By observing these standards, you acknowledge your responsibility as a VAL employee or volunteer to immediately report any breach of this code to [the Victorian Athletic League by phone: on 03 4239 0211](tel:0342390211), or via email val@val.org.au

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times.

Name: _____

Role: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____