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CIRU Framework for best safeguarding practice - ensuring a safe sporting environment

Premise:

All children in the Cook Islands have the right to participate in sport in a safe and enjoyable environment. Their rights are enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Child safeguarding is about keeping all children safe from harm, abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect. Having effective child safeguarding measures in place will ensure that CIRU is proactively working to ensure that children are kept safe. It is important for us to spread the message about keeping children safe, and to build a community culture of always acting in the best interest of all children.



Definitions:

- Safeguarding refers to the actions we take to ensure ALL children are safe from harm when involved in our clubs and activities
- Child protection is a set of activities that are required for SPECIFIC children who are at risk of/or are suffering harm
- Abuse refers to the acts of commission or omission that lead to a child experiencing harm
- Harm refers to the negative impact or consequences upon the child of those actions
- Violence refers to “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse” (Article 19 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Aims of this framework:

- Help create a safe sporting environment for children wherever they participate and at whatever level
- Provide a benchmark to assist sports providers and funders to make informed decisions
- Promote good practice and challenge practice that is harmful to children
- Provide clarity on safeguarding children to all involved in sport in the Cook Islands



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Framework for best practice - ensuring a safe sporting environment:

- All children have the right to participate, enjoy and develop through sport, in a safe and inclusive environment, free from all forms of abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation
- Children have the right to have their voices heard and listened to. They need to know who they can turn to when they have a concern about their participation in sport
- Everyone - CIRU Executive Committee, rugby club management, coaches and trainers, sponsors, village communities - has a responsibility to support the care and protection of our young people
- As a sports organisation providing activities for children and young people, CIRU must have a duty of care to them
- There are certain factors that leave some children more vulnerable to abuse, and steps need to be taken to address this
- Children have a right to be involved in shaping safeguarding policy and practice
- Organisations should always act in the best interests of the child
- **Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and not be discriminated against based on gender, race, age, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, beliefs, religious or political affiliation**
- The processes and activities for the creation, development and implementation of safeguarding measures should be inclusive

Adapted from: International Safeguards for Children in Sport. 2016
Photos: Cook Islands News