



EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS OF UMPIRES AND OFFICIALS

WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS OF UMPIRES & OFFICIALS IN FOOTBALL?

Umpires and officials across AFL programs and community clubs are required to follow safeguarding policies, procedures and codes of conduct and should make themselves familiar with those relevant to their roles.

Any behaviour from an umpire or official that is considered unsafe (and in some cases, illegal) will be addressed by the AFL, a league, club or association or even the police.

This information sheet is not just here to provide you with a guide of how you should behave, but it also informs you of how **other adults** should behave, so if you notice something that doesn't seem right, you can call it out.

DEFINITIONS

A Child: someone involved in footy who is 12 years old or younger- usually a player but may also be a sibling of a player or child of an adult at the club.

A Young Person: someone involved in footy who is between the ages of 13 and 18 years old - usually a player but could also be an umpire or in another role at the club, or a sibling or child of a player.

Adult: someone involved in footy who is over the age of 18 - this could be a coach, manager, umpire, club official, AFL staff member, player, volunteer, and/or a parent.



know what is ok



do what is right



act when you notice something

ALL ADULTS ARE EXPECTED TO ENSURE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ALWAYS FEEL SAFE AND WELCOME IN AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

We want all children and young people who participate in football to *be safe, feel safe, play safe.*

SNAPSHOT OF EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS

The table below outlines good practice guidance regarding expected behaviours of adults when engaging with children and young people in football and umpiring.



OK

Contact

Physical touch that is normal for football/umpiring and happens in front of other people and with the child or young person's consent.

This can include tackling, demonstrating skills and techniques, preventing injury, or keeping them safe, or high fives or a pat on the back to celebrate a win.

Communication

Guidance that is positive, helpful, and focused on the child or young person's football/umpiring skills and game, not them as a person.

Language that is clear and encouraging and that they can easily understand.

Online communication that includes a parent or carer and is used with the whole team.

Boundaries

When someone has safe or good boundaries it means they:

- have made sure children and young people understand their role
- act professionally – friendly but not a friend
- treat everyone in the squad fairly
- follow the rules with things like sharing information about a child or young person, or only taking photos of them with their permission and their parents or carers permission, and when it is about football/umpiring
- always behave appropriately when around the children and young people that they are responsible for.



NOT OK

Contact

Any touch a child or young person does not consent to, or that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Any touch that seems sexual, involves a child or young person's private parts, or embarrasses them.

Any touch that happens in a private place like the changerooms or a car.

Communication

Any language or communication that leaves a child or young person feeling uncomfortable, worried, scared or embarrassed.

Any comment online or in person that is sexual or private.

Any contact that happens outside of training and match day hours (like late at night), or on private chat platforms (like socials or texting), is over the top or excessive, or is about personal stuff, nothing to do with football/umpiring.

Boundaries

When someone has unsafe, or poor boundaries, it means they:

- favour, isolate or single out one person
- accept or give gifts to children, young people or their families (unless fairly distributed and prior consent has been obtained)
- contact a child or young person and/or their families (or former players) outside of football activities, including through social media, unless an established relationship already exists (family or friends) and no boundaries are crossed as part of that contact
- offer to assist a child or young person or their family with things that are outside of their role (help around the house / money / buying them things)
- drink alcohol, take drugs, swear or smoke in front of young people at football/umpiring.



Supervision

Umpires and officials who are in any way responsible for supervising children and young people in football/umpiring should:

- always know where children or young people are at all times
- give them privacy to use the bathroom or change rooms, but still make sure that they are safe
- wait with them until they have been collected
- only offer a lift if they have their licence and their car is insured, a parent or carer has provided written consent and another person from the club knows about it.

Environment

A safe environment for children and young people at football/umpiring looks like:

- a space that people from different backgrounds and abilities can access and are comfortable to access
- football trips that are fun and safe for children and young people to attend
- camps where children and young people are given privacy, made to feel welcome and are able to communicate with home when they need to
- change facilities in grounds that are appropriate for any gender and ensure shared facilities offer some privacy for young people to change/shower
- online spaces where communication is open and transparent and other adults can monitor.



Supervision

Umpires and officials who are in any way responsible for supervising children and young people in football/umpiring should not:

- be distracted by their phones or other people
- let young children use a bathroom without making sure there are no risks first
- leave a child or young person alone, even if they are late to be picked up
- drive children or young people around in their car recklessly, under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or without permission.

Environment

An unsafe environment for children and young people at football/umpiring looks like:

- a space that is difficult for children and young people with disabilities to access or where people from different cultural backgrounds feel left out
- footy trips or events that involve alcohol or drugs and easily get out of hand with no adults keeping an eye out for children and young people
- camps where children and young people are punished, humiliated or made to feel homesick and uncomfortable
- change facilities in grounds where there is no privacy and children, young people and those who identify as transgender or non-binary feel unsafe
- online spaces where communication is one to one and used to share inappropriate material not related to football/umpiring.

SAY SOMETHING

If you have concerns about the safety of a child or young person or have just seen or heard something that doesn't feel right, it is important you say something:



You can:

Speak directly with someone you trust in football like a coach, team manager, umpire, official or club representative.



Write down your concerns and pass them onto your club or association via email or a letter.



Use this QR code to raise a concern with the AFL



For any safeguarding queries email childsafety@afl.com.au

As always if anyone is in immediate danger contact the police on 000

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