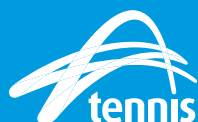




# FIRST STEPS TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN **COACHES**



A  
SAFER  
GAME  
PLAN

# FIRST STEPS TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN COACHES

There is little doubt the importance a coach plays in building stronger, healthier, happier and safer communities. As part of this responsibility, it is crucial that coaches publicly demonstrate their commitment to child safety. To help you create a child-safe environment, we have compiled these five first steps to safeguarding children.

## STEP ONE GET THE FACTS

An Australian research study conducted by Save the Children in 2019 found that one child is physically, emotionally or sexually abused every 16 minutes.

That equates to 88 children every day and over 32,000 children every year, usually by adults they have been taught to trust.

It's critical that we all play our part to ensure that Australian tennis is a sport where children can participate in child-safe and child-friendly environments.



## STEP TWO CREATE A CHILD-SAFE CULTURE

Tennis Australia is committed to providing child safe environments throughout our clubs, programs and tournaments. However, for this to be successful, the safety and wellbeing of children and young people from all forms of child abuse is a shared responsibility for everyone including parents, families, clubs, officials, volunteers and coaches. Even though you may not be directly working with children, it's still important to be aware of child safety and call out anything that is unsafe or doesn't seem right. If you are concerned a child is being abused or neglected, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, you must contact the relevant authorities in your state or Tennis Australia's Integrity and Compliance Unit.

Concerns may include:

- ▶ Harm, abuse or exploitation of a child
- ▶ Potential risk of harm, abuse or exploitation of a child
- ▶ Breaches of the [Member Protection Policy](#) or [Safeguarding Children Code of Conduct](#).

## STEP THREE TALK ABOUT CHILD SAFETY

As a tennis coach, you play a crucial role in engaging parents and children and encouraging the expected behaviours that contribute to a child safe culture. As part of this responsibility, it is important to promote your commitment to child safety - including information about who your local MPIO is. Tennis Australia recommends adopting a commitment statement which promotes your business' child safety position to staff, volunteers, children, families and the community.

# FIRST STEPS TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN COACHES

Tennis Australia's commitment to child-safety:

*'Tennis Australia has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of child abuse and is committed to ensuring the sport of tennis is a safe and friendly environment for children and young people. It is imperative that children and young people who access our activities, programs, events or services feel safe and supported.'*

You can also download a commitment to safeguarding children poster [here](#).

## STEP FOUR SCREENING OF COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS

Screening within your coaching business can reduce the risk of child abuse by ensuring all appointees are suitable for child-facing roles.

Tennis Australia recommends you consider the following processes before appointing a new coach:

- ▶ Clearly articulate their roles and responsibilities.
- ▶ Understand why the person wants to work in your business, in particular with children.
- ▶ Does their attitude and values align with yours?
- ▶ Undertake appropriate screening to avoid recruiting people who are not suitable (Working with Children Check).
- ▶ Carry out at least two reference checks, including their current or most recent supervisor.
- ▶ Have a probationary period to ensure your new coaches values and behaviours are consistent with your expectations.



## STEP FIVE LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Finally, lead by example and model positive, supportive and appropriate child-safe behaviours which will allow staff to learn from you.

Support your team to understand child safety and how to create a safe and inclusive environment for children.

Actively monitor and observe your new coaches and their interaction with children, regularly provide feedback and immediately raise matters of concern.

You may also consider undertaking the online Member Protection Information Officer course offered by Play By The Rules [here](#).

## FURTHER INFORMATION

All child safety information can be found [here](#)

If you have any questions regarding the content, please contact [integrity@tennis.com.au](mailto:integrity@tennis.com.au)