

## **BRISBANE AND DISTRICT LADIES GOLF ASSOCIATION**

### **RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR CHILD PROTECTION**

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANISATION**

1. Provide coaching in golf skills and etiquette
2. Provide golf competition events specifically for Juniors
3. Encourage Junior players to enter open golf events
4. Arrange camps for junior players to attend for golf instruction and entertainment.

#### **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF CHILDREN**

The Brisbane and District Ladies Golf Association (hereinafter referred to as the Association) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all junior golfers who participate in activities conducted by the Association. Our committee members, volunteer workers, parents, paid professional staff and any other adult who may be involved with Association activities associated with junior players are expected to treat them with respect and dignity at all times. In addition to children and young people learning to play the sport of golf, the Association is also committed to assisting them to enjoy the sport and to play it in the spirit of goodwill.

- To ensure children and young people are kept safe from harm, the Association has developed a Code of Conduct for interacting with children and young people. The Code of Conduct specifies standards relating to language, behaviour and physical contact between adults and children.
- The Association is committed to appropriate recruitment of volunteers and professional staff who can comply with the Code of Conduct.
- All adults involved in the management of junior players either in events or in training activities must hold a blue card.
- Implementation of safety procedures while children and young people are engaged in playing, practising, who are under instruction for golf, and for golf trips away from home.
- Participation of Parents in Association activities.
- The Association has developed guidelines and directions for handling disclosures of harm and suspicions of harm.
- Statement of consequences for non-compliance with child protection policy.

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

In accordance with the Statement of Commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, the Code of Conduct outlines the behaviour of all adults involved with junior golfers in activities designed to maximise their skills in playing the sport, in competition in the sport as well as their enjoyment from participation. The Code of Conduct addresses required adult behaviour associated with language, physical contact, relationships, discipline, bullying and other emotionally abusive behaviour. The Code of Conduct applies to all adults associated with juniors in all activities associated with golf: Association Committee Members, parents, golf professionals, volunteers, golf club employees.

#### **LANGUAGE**

- Communicate, both verbally and non-verbally, in a way which models and demonstrates respect for the rights, interests and wellbeing of all children and young people.
- No swearing or aggressive or abusive language is to be used.
- No language to be used which is humiliating or which impacts on the sense of well being or confidence of the junior golfer.

- When possible, frame communication from the positive perspective in interactions with children and young people.
- Do NOT become involved in inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature, make sexually suggestive comments or personally correspond (including email and/or mobile phone) with a child or young person in respect of personal or sexual feelings for a child or young person.

### **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

- No physical contact is to occur between any adult and the junior golfer on the golf course, on the practice fairway, during coaching or during a social event associated with golf. As an exception, should the coaching professional need to touch a young person to correct a swing style, another adult person must be present and such action must be with the consent of the junior player.
- Limit hugging when initiated by the child or young person by changing from a frontal hug to arm around the shoulder of child or young person.
- Do NOT kick, slap or push a child or young person.
- Do NOT allow a child or young person to sit on your lap.
- Physical discipline will not be given to junior golfers by any adult during a golfing activity. They should not be reprimanded publicly. Should a junior golfer need to be spoken to about behaviour issues, this should be done privately with two adults present. Parents will be informed about behaviour issues.

### **RELATIONSHIPS**

- Bullying behaviour by any adult or any other junior player is not acceptable behaviour. Such behaviour includes attempts to intimidate, ridicule or belittle, which may occur on the golf course, in practice, coaching or at Association organised social activities.
- Behave in a way which models and demonstrates respect for the rights, interests and wellbeing of all children and young people.
- Do NOT spend inappropriate time or give gifts or show special favours to a child or young person.
- Do NOT expose children or young people to sexual behaviour of others including displays of pornography.
- Do NOT persuade a child or young person that a 'special' relationship exists.

### **RECRUITMENT OF PEOPLE WHO CAN COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

- All adults involved in golf activities organised by the Association must be informed in writing of the conditions of the Code of Conduct.
- All adults to be involved in golfing activities with juniors must be asked whether they are able and prepared to comply with the Code.
- Any adult who is not able and prepared to comply with the Code of Conduct will not be permitted to be involved in any Association golf activity.
- Where possible and appropriate, encourage parents to become involved.

### **HOLDING OF THE BLUE CARD**

- All adults: committee members, parents, professional coaches, volunteers and others who are to be involved with juniors in Association golf activities (playing, coaching, practising, golfing trips or social activities) must hold a Blue Card.
- A Register of all blue card holders involved with junior golf will be kept by the Association.
- If an adult does not hold a blue card, they will not be permitted to be involved in any Association activity in which they have any contact with children or young people.

## **SAFETY PROCEDURES DURING PLAY, COACHING AND PRACTICE AND ON GOLF TRIPS**

### **SAFETY DURING PLAY**

- Ensure all golf is played on registered golf courses. Such courses are required to have attended to safety issues. It is reasonable to expect an acceptable level of playing safety on these courses.
- Ensure all children and young people are instructed in playing etiquette and behaviour associated with safety. This to include, but not exclusive to: not standing forward of a person hitting a ball, retrieving balls from hazards (falling into water, snake/spider bite in bush), throwing a golf club in anger, the danger of lightning on course, that play occurs in groups of not more than four players plus caddies.
- That children and young people are encouraged in safety health issues during play, particularly to carry and consume sufficient fluid.

### **SAFETY DURING PRACTICE**

- That practice occurs on a designated practice area.
- That children and young people are instructed on practice safety behaviour.
- That specific practice occurs only on specially designated areas. For example, chipping only onto practice greens, bunker shots only from practice bunkers, drivers and long irons on areas large enough to safely accommodate long shots.
- That no person goes forward of any person engaged in striking a ball. This relates to people collecting balls for hitting while others continue to hit.
- That players stand sufficiently far apart from each other to ensure no person is at risk of being struck by a golf club during a swing.
- That children and young people are instructed about the dangers of golf clubs if used for any purpose other than hitting balls. For example chasing others or generally swinging a club around in an uncontrolled manner.
- That all practice sessions to be supervised by a sufficient number of adults to ensure safety. For safety at practice, at least one adult per 20 young people.

### **SAFETY DURING COACHING**

- Consult with the coaching professional regarding the appropriate number of players they can safety cope with and engage extra professionals if necessary to ensure an acceptable player:coach ratio.
- If there is only one professional available for coaching, ensure another adult is present during coaching sessions.
- Ensure the coaching professional is aware of the Association Code of Conduct and holds a blue card.

## **SAFETY DURING GOLF TRIPS/CAMPS**

- Provide adequate adult supervision to include more than one adult. All adults to hold a blue card.
- If the trip/camp includes both female and male players, adults to include female and male.
- No drug use, alcohol or smoking during the trip/camp.
- Children and young people to only engage in Association run or attended social activities. Children or young people will not be permitted to go out socially either alone or in groups. They are not to visit relatives or friends unless prearranged and with consent of parents.
- All rules of behaviour, particularly expectations regarding the consumption of substances and social activities must be discussed with all participants in the trip/camp and they must agree to abide by them in writing. Consequences for a breach of the agreement need to be made clear and be accepted by all trip/camp participants.
- Accommodation to be arranged in a suitable and safe environment. Should children or young people be billeted, hosting adults must hold a blue card.
- Parents MUST sign a letter of agreement that their children attend the trip/camp. Attached to the letter must be rules of behaviour to which the parents must agree. The rules must also specify consequences for a breach of rules and also be accepted by the parents.

## **PARTICIPATION OF PARENTS**

- Knowledge of who has parental responsibility for each child or young person together with names, addresses and contact numbers for the parent.
- Welcome parents to activities conducted by the Association for children and young people.
- Welcome parents' participation and assistance in Association activities, provided they hold a blue card.
- Treat important family information in confidence.
- Provide parents with information about the Code of Conduct and inform that this Code applies to all adults involved in Association activities including parents.

## **DISCLOSURE OF HARM AND SUSPICIONS OF HARM**

### **DISCLOSURES AND SUSPICION**

- Any disclosure or suspicion MUST be acted on.
- There are 'reasonable grounds' to suspect harm if:
  - A child or young person tells you they have been harmed
  - If someone else, another child, a parent, staff member, tells you that harm has occurred
  - A child or young person tells you they know someone who has been harmed (it may be them)
  - You note a significant behaviour change in a child or young person
- Disclosures of harm may sound like:
  - 'I think I saw....'
  - 'Somebody told me that.....'
  - 'I just think you should know....'
  - 'I'm not sure what I want you to do, but....'
- Any disclosure of harm is important and must be acted upon, regardless of whether:

The harm has been caused by a person from within or outside the Association  
 The child or young person disclosing the harm is from within or outside the Association

### RECEIVING A DISCLOSURE

- Don't panic or react in a shocked or critical way.
- Tell the person you are glad they have told you. Re assure the child or young person that they have done the right thing to tell you.
- Find a private place to talk so that you can receive all the information the person has to tell you BUT DO **NOT** ask leading questions or attempt to investigate the matter. Leading questions include: 'Did X touch you', 'Did they touch you where your underwear goes'.
- Only ask sufficient questions to gain enough information to notify police/Department of Child Safety. Such questions include: 'Tell me what happened'. 'What happened then'.
- When given the disclosure, do NOT say 'I won't tell' and do NOT promise to keep secrets.
- You need to let them know you will tell someone else who can help them and reassure them you will only tell someone who will make them safe.
- Believe the person. It is not up to us to judge whether a child, young person or anyone else is telling the truth. Act on the basis that what we have been told is the truth.
- After we have spoken to the child or young person, make detailed notes. These to include:

The date and time of the disclosure,  
 The location of the disclosure,  
 Who was present during the disclosure,  
 If evident, why the disclosure occurred at that particular time,  
 Exactly what the disclosing person said using 'I said' 'They said' statements.  
 The questions you asked  
 Any comments you made  
 Your actions following the disclosure.

If taking notes as the disclosure is occurring, explain why we are doing it and why it is important ie to ensure an accurate record for any subsequent investigation. Remember to use language appropriate for the age and maturity of the child or young person.

### REPORTING A DISCLOSURE

- The Association's first responsibility is to report the disclosure either to the Queensland Police Service and/or to the Department of Child Safety.
- The report, if possible, should be made by an Association Committee member in consultation with the person who received the information should that person not have been a Committee member.

#### DO NOT

Conduct our own investigation to substantiate claims  
 Hold our own internal hearing (a 'kangaroo court')  
 Attempt to mediate a settlement of the matter with the perpetrator and/or child and child's family

- Police and Department of Child Safety will require the following information:

Details of the disclosure  
 Name, age, address of the child or young person harmed  
 Whereabouts of child or young person at that point in time  
 Any information about the alleged perpetrator of the harm  
 Our details

- Where the disclosure indicated that harm may have been caused by a family member or where parents are not acting to protect their child from harm the incident should be reported to the Department of Child Safety – if after hours to the Child Safety After Hours Office or during the week to the local Child Safety Service Centre.
- Where the disclosure of harm indicated a criminal offence may have occurred, then the police service should be notified.
- Discuss with police and/or Department of Child Safety staff whether to notify parents or wait until they have begun investigation. The longer the time before police or Department of Child Safety can become actively involved, the more likely those parents will need to be notified prior to the investigation. As soon as practical and appropriate, contact parents directly to inform them of the situation.

### **PROVIDING SUPPORT**

- Support all persons involved including:
  - The child or young person who has been harmed
  - The person making the disclosure if it was not the child or young person concerned
  - The person receiving the disclosure
  - The alleged perpetrator
- Do not allow contact, either physical, auditory or visual between the alleged perpetrator and the child harmed.
- Request the alleged perpetrator cease involvement in the golfing activity (play, practice, coaching or trip/camp) until the matter has been investigated by police and/or Department of Child Safety.
- If allegations are proven, perpetrator will not be permitted to be involved in further Association activities of any kind when children or young people are present.

### **NON COMPLIANCE WITH CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Non compliance with child protection policy refers to the Code of Conduct which puts in place the Association's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people involved in all aspects of Association run activities relating to the sport of golf. The Code of Conduct addresses required adult behaviour associated with language, physical contact, relationships, discipline, bullying and other emotionally abusive behaviour. When non compliance with the required adult behaviour occurs the Association will initiate the most appropriate of the following:

- Should any adult not comply with the Code of Conduct, such behaviour observed by others, the first step is to discuss this with the person of concern in a private place and in a respectful manner. This discussion to occur with two Association Committee members and the person of concern. Before such a discussion takes place, Association Committee members to obtain detailed information about the specific behaviour of concern.
- Should an informal complaint be made about a breach of behaviour by any adult, engage in an informal resolution process which may involve discussion with the person who made the complaint and the person complained about. Alternatively, this may be resolved by a discussion between the person of concern and Association Committee members. This should be conducted by two members of the Association committee.
- Should a formal complaint be made about a breach of behaviour by any adult that does not constitute a need for police or Department of Child Safety involvement, consider a formal dispute resolution process.
- Should Association Committee members be unsure whether a breach of the Code of Conduct requires contact with police and/or Department of Child Safety, contact should be made with one of these organisations to discuss the matter in general before making a report.

- Should any adult not be able to acknowledge their inappropriate behaviour and change to an acceptable level of interaction with children and young people, that person is requested not to participate in Association activities.

Brisbane and District Ladies Golf Association  
Risk Management Strategy  
19<sup>th</sup> March, 2007