



To our valued Cougars community

Footy season is in full swing and the mighty Cougars has grown to 14 teams for Season 25 (with players in 18 League teams overall).

We have 295 players registered and playing footy this year – it's great to have so many kids actively engaged in outdoor, winter team sport and equally great to have so many parents and carers getting amongst it.

It means that there's a lot of kids at training, matches and around our club at training and on match days.

NJFC, inclusive of all of its adult members, must be committed to providing its players with a safe environment in which to train and play in community sport.

As a fully child-facing organisation, child safety must be the number 1 priority for all of us and everyone in our club plays a role in keeping children safe from harm.

It means that the parents and carers have a responsibility to be available to help with training and to fully participate on match day in volunteer roles, so that the games can be played in accordance with the YJFL by laws. Not enough volunteers = no matches.

While some are specialist roles (Coach and Trainer), most roles, even acting Team Manager or Ground Manager, can be carried out by ANY available parent or carer.

How we provide a safe environment for children and young people includes adherence to the following child safety requirements:



WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK & VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION

A Working with Children Check (**WWCC**) is mandatory for any person over the age of 18 who is a Coach, Assistant Coach, Team Manager, Runner, Trainer, Club President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer or Committee Member.

Additionally, the YJFL also recommends that volunteer Umpire Escorts have a valid WWCC, as many of the match umpires are children / young people.

NJFC exists to support children, and to this end we ask that all volunteers and helpers ensure that their Working with Children Checks are up to date. Apply here if you don't have one or need to update it <https://www.vic.gov.au/working-with-children-check>

To record your volunteer status and your WWCC details, complete or update your Play HQ Volunteer registration (which needs to be done each year) by following this link <https://www.playhq.com/afl/register/1d8377>

Choose to register yourself; choose your role; fill in all information on the 'participant details' page, including your WWCC number (card or lodgement number) and finish.

Adults are responsible for child safety across all child-based environments from child care through to Secondary School and all community-based organisations. NJFC is one of many organisations that asks for active co-operation from parents and carers to make places and spaces safer for children.

MANAGEMENT OF CHILD SAFETY RISK

In addition to general health and safety risks, all adults involved in the club must be committed to proactively manage any risks to children.

To reduce the risk of child abuse occurring, adults should avoid one-on-one unsupervised situations with children, except in an emergency.

This should be a consideration when, for example:

- Children are using change room facilities (home or away) – supervision may be required for safety but privacy is a key consideration
- Travelling to/from training, games, or other Club events
- Having verbal or physical contact with children during training or in match day settings and ensuring all communication and contact is safe and respectful
- Communicating directly with children via text, messaging apps, social media, email, written correspondence, or telephone (parents and/or other adult team officials should receive copies of all written communications sent to children) ensuring all communication and contact is safe and respectful
- filming or taking photos of children for coaching purposes, where prior consent must be obtained from a parent / carer and the videos or images are deleted within an agreed timeframe

As outlined above, the Club asks that all adult volunteers register themselves on Play HQ as Volunteers <https://www.playhq.com/afl/register/1d8377>, inclusive of the details of a valid WWCC.

In the event that you'd like to discuss the details of this email, or any other child safety matter with club representatives, you can contact:

Kellie Burns, President, Female Development and Child Safety Officer

President@njfc.com.au or 0413 597 087

Peter Simm, Vice President, Team Manager Co-ordinator and Child Safety Officer

vicepresident@njfc.com.au or 0407 965 560

Tim Wright, Child Safety Officer

NJFCChildSafety@njfc.com.au or 0438 067 103

Please find following helpful and important resources regarding Child Safety for all of our players and member families.

AFL child safety resources

<https://play.afl/safeguarding>

<https://play.afl/learning-resources/safeguarding?filter=390>

YJFL child safety resources

<https://www.yarrajfl.org.au/safeguarding-children>

NJFC

NJFC Child Safety Code of Conduct

NJFC Child Safety Policy

Access the Code of Conduct and the Child Safety policy here:https://njfc.com.au/about/https-drive-google-com-file-d-1hylbg_kmz5mqxgtavnzgxggry4uypcyp-viewuspsharing/

Below are organisations that offer mental health and wellbeing support to everyone in our community:

- [KidsHelpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Beyond Blue – Anxiety and Depression](#)
- [Butterfly Foundation – Body Image and Eating Disorders](#)
- [Minus18](#) and [QLife](#) – Support for LGBTQI+ young people
- [eSafety](#) – Online Safety