



# CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Reviewed and Approved by: The Management Board of  
Loofball Sport Development Initiative (LSDI)

[info@lsd-initiative.org](mailto:info@lsd-initiative.org)  
[www.lsd-initiative.org](http://www.lsd-initiative.org)

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## Introduction

Loofball Sport Development Initiative (LSDI) acknowledges that staff and volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the positive experiences of athletes.

Protecting and safeguarding children is an imperative at LSDI, with several measures applied to achieve this. These measures include but not limited to:

- Prohibiting any form of abuse against children
- Carefully selecting and screening people whose role requires them to have regular contact with children
- Ensuring codes of conduct are promoted, enforced and reviewed
- Providing procedures for raising concerns or complaints
- Providing opportunities for our athletes to contribute to and provide feedback on our performances and
- Providing education and/or information to those involved in the sport on child abuse and child protection.

## A. Terms under This Policy

For the purpose of this policy statement:

- i. LSDI refers to Loofball Sport Development Initiative.
- ii. DCPO refers to Designated Child Protection Officer, a staff responsible for handling, managing and reporting concerns about children and putting in place measures to safeguard children.
- iii. In line with the UNCRC Article 1, the term 'child' describes any person below 18 years of age participating in activities organized or led by LSDI or its affiliates.
- iv. The term 'staff' describes those representing LSDI or its affiliates, including those working on a paid or unpaid basis.

## B. The Purpose of This Policy

- To protect children and young people who receive LSDI's services or services from its affiliated organization;
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection;

The LSDI believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind.

If anyone bound by this policy reasonably suspects that a child is being abused should contact the nearest child protection agency and immediately report it to their DCPO. All allegations of child abuse will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially.

A person will not be victimized for reporting an allegation of child abuse and the privacy of all persons concerned will be respected.

## C. Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to the following:

- LSDI and its affiliated bodies
- Individuals sitting on boards, committees and sub-committees of LSDI
- Employees and volunteers
- Coaches and athletes
- Match officials
- All categories of members
- Parents, guardians, spectators and sponsors/partners
- Support personnel (e.g. managers, health officers, etc.)

This policy will continue to apply to a person even after they have stopped their association or employment with LSDI or its affiliated organization if disciplinary action, relating to an allegation of child abuse against that person, has commenced.

## D. Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children

## E. The Rights of the Child

All children have:

- The right to have their needs met and safeguarded
- The right to be protected from neglect, abuse and exploitation
- The right to be protected from discrimination
- The right to be treated as an individual

## F. Child Abuse

Child abuse relates to children at risk of harm (usually by adults, sometimes by other children) and often by those they know and trust. It can take many forms. Children may be harmed by both verbal and physical actions and by people failing to provide them with basic care. Child abuse may include:

- Physical abuse by hurting a child or a child's development (e.g. hitting, shaking or other physical harm; giving a child alcohol or drugs).
- Sexual abuse by adults or other children where a child is encouraged or forced to watch or engage in sexual activity or where a child is subjected to any other inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature (e.g. sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, pornography including child pornography or inappropriate touching or conversations).
- Emotional abuse by ill-treating a child (e.g. humiliation, taunting, sarcasm, yelling, negative criticism, name calling, ignoring or placing unrealistic expectations on a child).
- Neglect (e.g. failing to give food, water, shelter or clothing or to protect a child from danger or foreseeable risk of harm or injury).

## G. Code of Conduct

LSDI requires every individual and organization bound by this policy to:

- Be ethical, fair and honest in all their dealings with other people associated with the organization
- Treat all persons with respect and courtesy and have proper regard for their dignity, rights and obligations
- Always place the safety and welfare of children above other considerations
- Operate within the rules and spirit of the sport
- Comply with all relevant laws (Federal and State), particularly anti-discrimination and child protection laws
- Be responsible and accountable for their conduct and
- Abide by the relevant Role-Specific Codes of Conduct.

## H. Organizational Responsibilities

LSDI and its affiliated members must:

- Adopt, implement and comply with this policy
- Publish, distribute and otherwise promote this policy and the consequences for breaching it
- Promote appropriate standards of conduct at all times
- Promptly deal with any breaches of or complaints made under this policy in an impartial, sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner

- Apply this policy consistently without fear or favor
- Recognize and enforce any penalty imposed under this policy
- Ensure that a copy of this policy is available or accessible to the persons to whom this policy applies
- Appoint or have access to appropriately trained people to receive and handle complaints and allegations and display their names and contact details in a way that is readily accessible
- Continually conduct risk assessments specific to child protection on the activities conducted and implement guidelines as appropriate. Such guidelines will be documented and included in the appendix to this Child Protection Risk Management Strategy and
- Monitor and review this policy at least annually.

## I. Individual Responsibilities

Individuals bound by this policy are responsible for:

- Making themselves aware of the policy and complying with the standards of conduct outlined in this policy
- Consenting to a working with children check if the individual holds or applies for a role that involves regular contact with people under the age of 18 years and in accordance with this policy
- Complying with all other requirements of this policy
- Co-operating in providing a discrimination, child abuse and harassment free sporting environment
- Understanding the possible consequences of breaching this policy.

## J. Breach of Policy

It is a breach of this policy for any person or organization to which this policy applies, to have been found to have:

- Done anything contrary to this policy
- Breached the Code of Conduct and Role-Specific Codes of Conduct
- Brought LSDI or one of its affiliates into disrepute
- Failed to follow LSDI's policies and procedures for the protection, safety and welfare of children
- Appointed or continued to appoint a person to a role that involves working with children and young people contrary to this policy
- Discriminated against or harassed any child
- Victimized another person for reporting a complaint
- Engaged in child abuse (as defined) with a child that the person supervises, or has influence, authority or power over

- Made a complaint they know to be untrue, vexatious, malicious or improper
- Failed to comply with a penalty imposed after a finding that the individual has breached this policy
- Failed to comply with a direction given to the individual during the discipline process.

## K. Complaints

LSDI aims to provide an easy to use, confidential and trustworthy procedure for complaints based on the principles of natural justice. Any person may report a complaint about a person bound by this policy if they reasonably believe that a person has breached this policy. A complaint should be reported to the relevant DCPO.

A complaint may be reported either in writing or verbally.

All complaints will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. The investigation procedure for child abuse is outlined below.

## L. Investigation Procedure

An allegation of child abuse is a very serious matter and must be handled with a high degree of sensitivity. The initial response to a complaint that a child has allegedly been abused should be immediate if the incident is serious or criminal in nature while less serious/urgent allegations should be acted upon as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours.

The following is a basic outline of the key processes to follow.

### Step 1- Clarify basic details of the allegation

- Any complaints, concerns or allegations of child abuse should be made or referred to the nearest relevant DCPO.
- The initial response of the person that receives the complaint from the child (or person on behalf of the child) is crucial to the well-being of the child. It is important for the person receiving the information to:
  - ✓ Listen to, be supportive and do not dispute what the child says
  - ✓ Reassure the child that what has occurred is not the fault of the child
  - ✓ Ensure the child is safe
  - ✓ Be honest with the child and explain that other people may need to be told in order to stop what is happening and
  - ✓ Ensure that what the child says is quite clear but do not elicit detailed information about the abuse. You should avoid suggestive or leading questions.
- The person receiving the complaint should obtain and clarify basic details (if possible) such as:

- ✓ Child's name, age and address
- ✓ Person's reason for suspecting abuse (observation, injury or other) and
- ✓ Names and contact details of all people involved, including witnesses.

### **Step 2 – Protect the child**

- The DCPO should assess the risks and take interim action to ensure the child/ children safety. Some options could include; redeployment of the alleged offender to a non-child related position, supervision of the alleged offender or removal/suspension from their duties until the allegations are finally determined.
- The DCPO should also address the support needs of the person against whom the complaint is made. Supervision of the person should ideally occur with the knowledge of the person. If stood down, it should be made clear to all parties that are aware of the incident that this does not mean the person is guilty and a proper investigation still needs to be undertaken.

### **Step 3 – Determine whether the allegation is of a less serious nature (e.g. verbal abuse) or is a serious or criminal allegation (e.g. sexual or physical abuse)**

- Any allegation of a serious or criminal nature referred to the DCPO must immediately be reported to the Police or the relevant Government Agency and the LSDI State Coordinator or Sports Director.
- Allegations of a less serious nature are handled by the relevant DCPO.

### **For Allegations of a Less Serious Nature (Designated Child Protection Officer)**

#### **Step 1 – Further clarify and investigate allegation**

- Normally this is carried out by the DCPO, to make contact and meet with each of the people involved to obtain details of the allegation.
- The investigation should follow the procedure set out below:
- The complainant will be interviewed and the complaint documented in writing
- The details of the complaint will be conveyed to the person/people complained about (respondent(s)) in full. The respondent(s) must be given sufficient information to enable them to properly respond to the complaint
- The respondent(s) will be interviewed and given the opportunity to respond. The respondent(s) response to the complaint will be documented in writing
- If there is a dispute over the facts, then statements from witnesses and other relevant evidence will be obtained to assist in a determination
- The DCPO will make a finding as to whether the complaint is:
  - ✓ substantiated (there is sufficient evidence to support the complaint);
  - ✓ inconclusive (there is insufficient evidence either way);



- ✓ unsubstantiated (there is sufficient evidence to show that the complaint is unfounded); and/or
- ✓ mischievous, vexatious or knowingly untrue.
- A report documenting the complaint and summarizing the investigation process and key points that were found to be substantiated, inconclusive, unsubstantiated and/or mischievous will be provided to the Management Committee along with recommendations for future actions
- Strict confidentiality, impartiality, fairness and due process must be maintained at all times.

### **Step 2 – Undertake disciplinary action**

- If disciplinary action is to be taken, follow the procedures outlined later in this policy
- Implement any disciplinary decision recommended by the Management Committee. The action should be immediate.

### **Step 3 – Right of Appeal**

In the event that any member so disciplined, suspended or expelled wishes to appeal against the decision, such an appeal shall be lodged in accordance with the relevant constitution.

### **For Allegations of a Serious or Criminal Nature**

#### **Step 1 – If child at risk of harm (e.g. sexual or physical abuse), report it to the authorities**

- If the allegation involves a child at risk of harm, the incident should immediately be reported to the police or other appropriate authority. You may need to report to both the police and the relevant government agency
- Relevant child protection agencies should be contacted for advice if there is any doubt about whether the complaint should be reported
- The DCPO must advise the Management Committee about the complaint and the actions taken
- The Management Committee will provide appropriate assistance as required.

#### **Step 2 – Undertake disciplinary action**

- For incidents of a serious or criminal nature, no disciplinary action should be taken until the Police investigation/ action is concluded

(See Child Protection Response Chart in APPENDIX A)

## M. Disciplinary Measures

It must be noted that allegations of a serious or criminal nature must be reported to the police or other Government agencies as appropriate.

Any disciplinary measure imposed under this policy must:

- Observe any contractual and employment rules and requirements
- Conform to the principles of natural justice
- Be fair and reasonable
- Be based on the evidence and information presented
- Be within the powers of the disciplinary powers of the constitution of LSDI or its affiliate.

Subject to contractual and employment requirements, if a finding is made that an individual has breached the Child Protection Policy (including the Codes of Conduct), one or more of the following forms of discipline may be imposed:

- A direction that the individual make a verbal and/ or written apology
- A written warning
- A direction that the individual attend counseling to address their behaviour
- A withdrawal of any awards or achievements bestowed upon the individual
- A demotion or transfer of the individual to another location, role or activity
- A suspension of the individual's membership or participation or engagement in a role or activity
- Recommend that the individual's membership, appointment or engagement be terminated
- Expulsion of the individual's membership or participation or engagement in a role or activity
- Any other form of discipline that the tribunal considers appropriate.

### **Factors to Consider When Imposing Discipline**

The form of discipline to be imposed on an individual will depend on factors such as:

- Nature and seriousness of the behaviour or incidents
- In a case where action is taken concurrently with or in lieu of a resolution of a formal complaint, the wishes of the complainant
- If the individual concerned knew or should have known that the behaviour was a breach of the policy
- Level of remorse of the respondent(s)
- The effect of the proposed disciplinary measures on the respondent(s) including any personal, professional or financial consequences
- If there have been relevant prior warnings or disciplinary action
- If there are any mitigating circumstances such that the respondent(s) shouldn't be disciplined at all or not disciplined so seriously.

## N. Risk Management

### Coaches and Officials

Coaches and officials need to be aware that not all children will understand an action or request in the same manner. One child may see an action as usual or acceptable behaviour while another may find it unacceptable. A child's interpretation of an action may also be influenced by cultural and religious differences, gender and prior experiences. It is important therefore to be aware of your communication style.

The following principles or actions may help coaches provide a safe environment:

- Ensure your actions at all times are unambiguously professional. Give a verbal explanation, in front of all athletes (and preferably parents as well) of how, where, when and why you may need to touch athletes
- Remember that the welfare of the child or children is always of paramount importance
- Know the policies, complaint processes and guidelines under the Child Protection Policy and how they apply to you
- Understand and commit to the coaches and officials codes of conduct
- Understand how the child protection legislation in Queensland may affect you
- Ensure that any physical contact with children is appropriate to the development of skills required for Little Athletics (e.g. it would be appropriate to teach a child to throw a discus by putting your hands on the upper torso, but it would not be appropriate to make contact around other parts of the body as this is not essential to the development of technique). Generally physical contact with athletes should be to develop skills, to give sports massage, to treat an injury or to prevent or respond to an injury
- Be careful about which part of your body is and how much of it is in contact with a child's body
- Avoid unaccompanied and unobserved activities with children. Try not to separate yourself and a child from the line of sight of other people. If you need to have a private talk with a child about their ability or behaviour, do this in an open place near others. Invite another coach or support person to join the conversation or talk to more than one child at a time
- Have sufficient coaches/assistants for effective supervision based on the age and number of children involved. Provide for disability considerations in regard to supervision
- Use positive and age-appropriate language when talking to and in the presence of children. Avoid bad or aggressive language that could intimidate a child or set a bad example
- Before entering change rooms knock or announce that you will be coming in and try to have at least one other adult with you. Do not isolate yourself and a child from others in the change room
- Have a policy that if a parent is late picking up their child that the second to last child and their parent or guardian will wait with you and the child. This will also enable you to concentrate on making contact with the parent

- Avoid the risk of being left alone with a child by having a parent, guardian or support person assist you with the training. Require that person to wait with you until all children have left
- Do not engage in or let others engage in any of the following:
  - Abusive initiation or bonding activities
  - Forcing children into 'macho type' activities
  - Rough, physical hurtful or sexually provocative games
  - Regular scapegoating, ridiculing, rejecting or isolating a child
- Maintain control – avoid losing your temper (verbally or physically). If you find you regularly lose your temper with children you should seek support or consider whether you have the patience to work with children. Some ideas to assist with maintaining control include:
  - Set up basic rules; at the beginning of the year or season, such as follow instructions, no put-downs. Make sure children are aware of these rules
  - Give positive messages
  - Have a time out area for children that are not behaving
  - Adopt a card system to express concerns with a child's behaviour rather than becoming verbally agitated e.g. a yellow card is a warning, two yellow cards means time out for 2 minutes, a red card could mean the child misses out on next week's competition.

## **Parents/Guardians**

Parents often turn to sport as a safe place for children to build character, develop skills, and learn valuable lessons and to have fun. While involvement in sport remains a positive experience for most participants, parents are now aware that children can face the risk of being harassed and abused in sport. In addition to sport organizations, parents can also play a key role in creating a safe environment for children in sport.

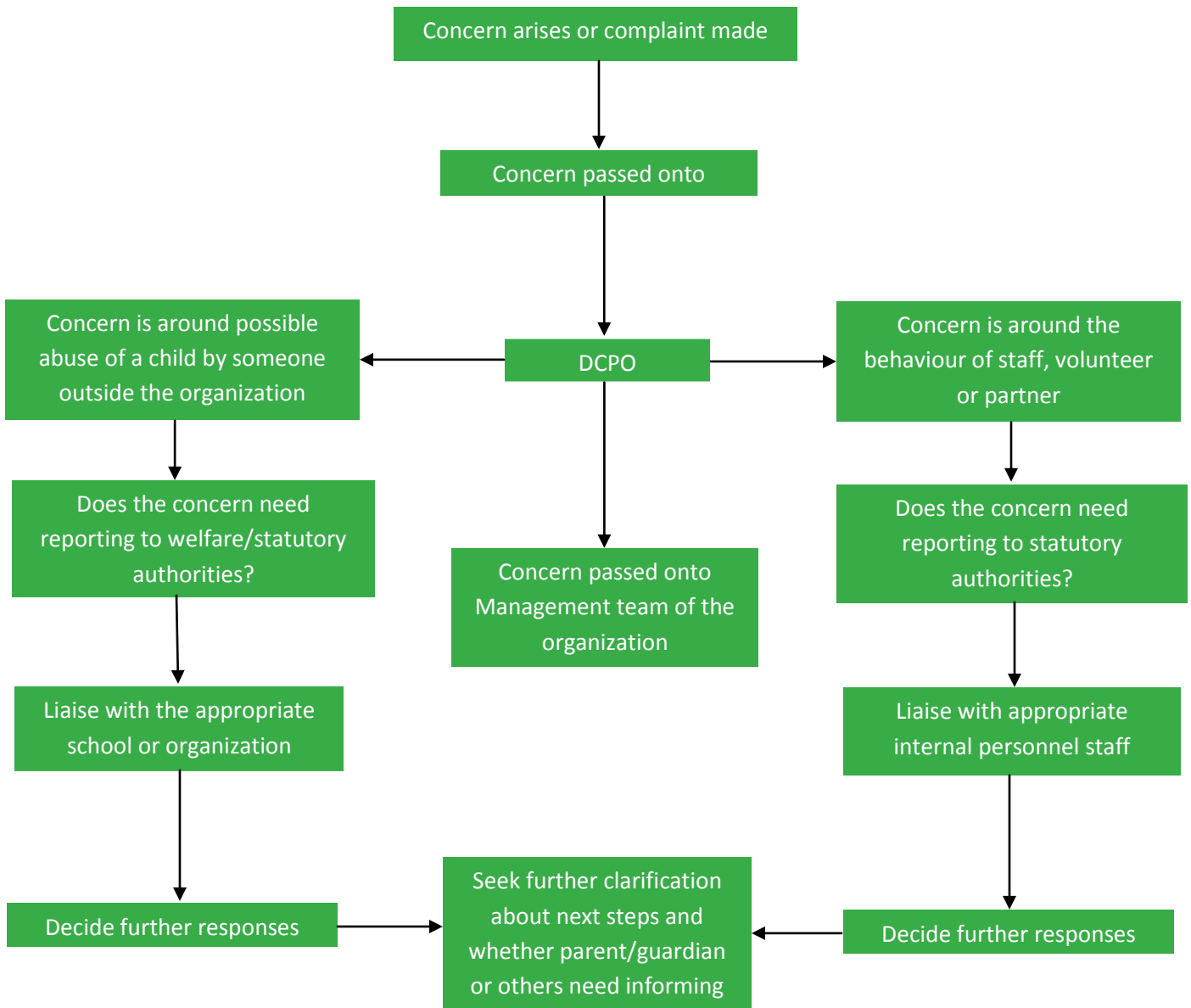
The following actions will help parents contribute to providing a safe environment:

- Get involved and get to know your child's coach. Maintain open and frank communication. If things occur that disturb you, talk to the coach about them
- Speak out when you hear language or attitudes that contribute to a negative or unsafe environment. You may wish to pursue your issues with the DCPO.
- Be careful not to put coaches on pedestals. Tell your children it's okay to say 'no' if the coach is doing something that makes them feel uncomfortable
- Make an effort to attend training and games whenever you can
- Be wary of private, closed training sessions. If they occur on a regular basis ask the coach for an explanation
- Be wary of any increases of the amount of time the coach spends with your children beyond the training session
- If you volunteer in the sport and are asked to take part in screening, accept this as a positive step to keep children safe
- Make sure you are not part of the problem. Don't sling verbal abuse at officials, coaches or others
- Know and abide by the Parents Code of Conduct and encourage others to do the same
- Encourage your child to play by the rules
- Never ridicule your child for making a mistake.

# APPENDIX A

## Child Protection Response Chart

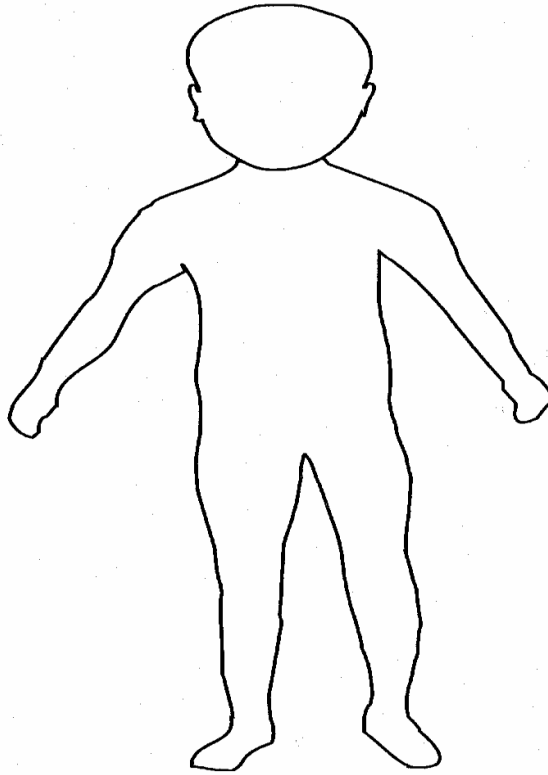
The chart below shows the procedure for responding to reports of concern.



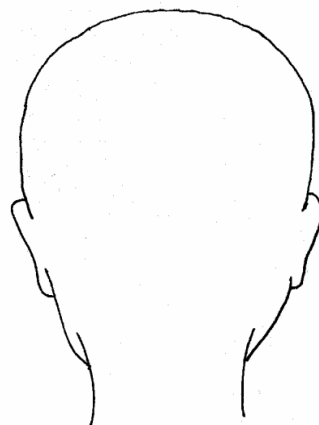
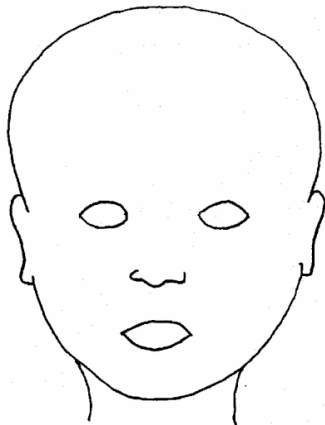
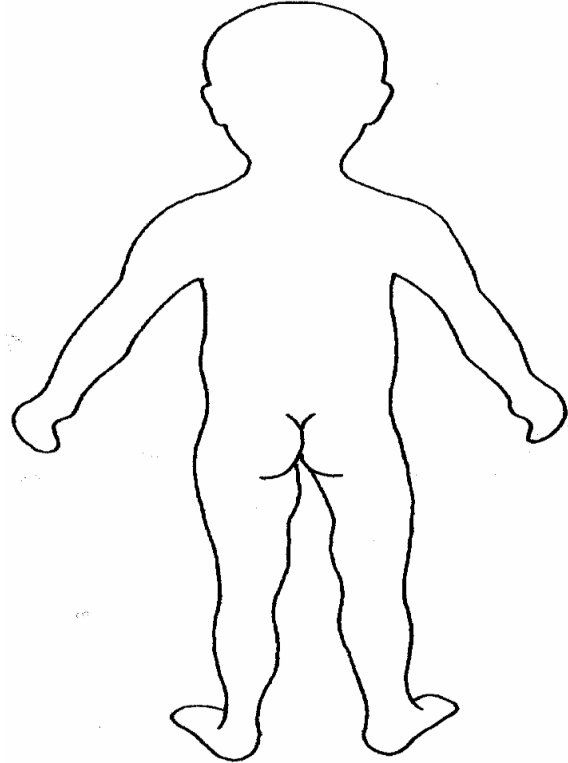
# APPENDIX B

## Child's Body Map

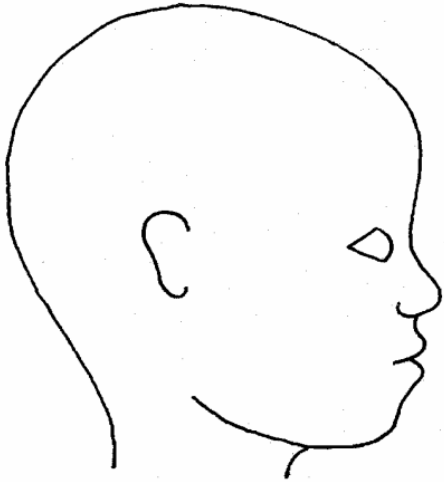
FRONT



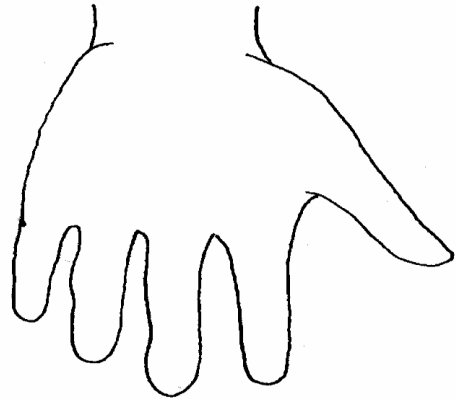
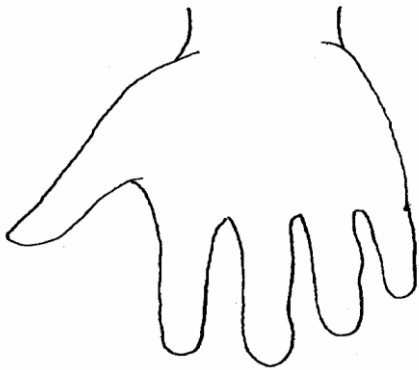
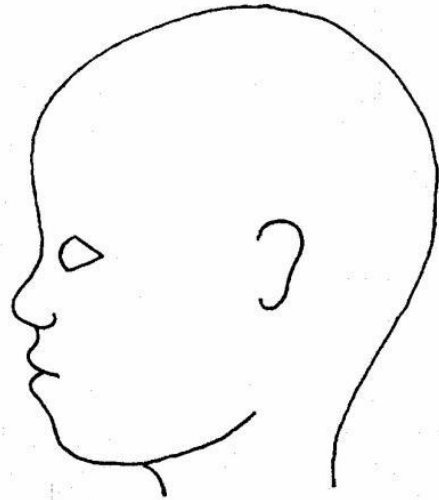
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**RIGHT**



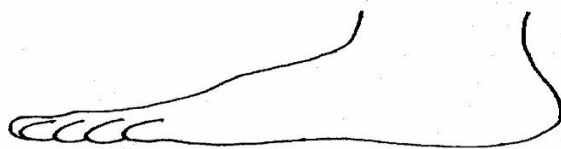
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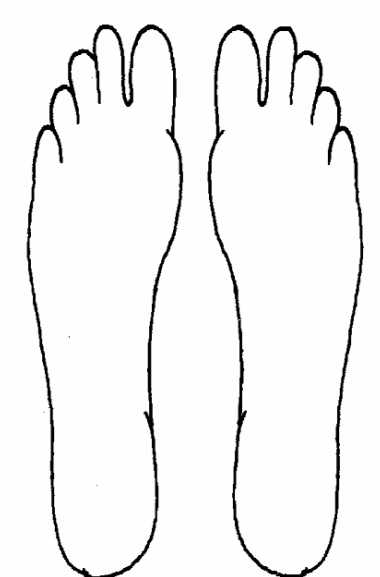
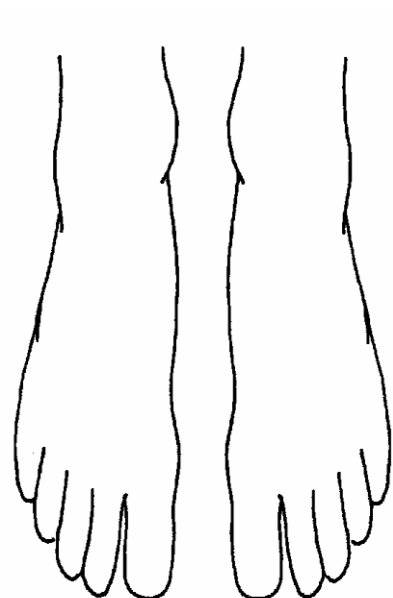




**TOP**



**BOTTOM**



## APPENDIX C

### Grievance or Complaint Form

Designated Child Protection Officer's Name:	Date:
Complainant's Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Over 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18
Association with/role in LSDI or its affiliated body	<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official (please specify) .....
Facts as stated by complainant	
Nature of complaint (category/basis/grounds) Can tick more than one box	<input type="checkbox"/> Harassment <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual / sexist <input type="checkbox"/> Selection dispute <input type="checkbox"/> Sexuality <input type="checkbox"/> Personality clash <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy <input type="checkbox"/> Physical abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Victimization <input type="checkbox"/> Child Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Other .....
Feelings expressed by complainant (completing this may help to separate emotional content from facts)	
What they want to happen to fix issue	
What information I provided	
What they are going to do now	

## APPENDIX D

### Child Abuse Allegation Form

Ensure the procedures outlined in this policy are followed and advice is sought from the relevant Government agency and/or police for allegations of a serious or criminal nature.

Complainant's Name (if other than the child)		Date Formal Complaint was Received / /
Association/role in LSDI or its affiliated body		
Child's name		Age:
Child's address		
Person's reason for suspecting abuse (e.g. observation, injury, disclosure)		
Name of person complained about		
Association/role in LSDI or its affiliated body	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator (volunteer) <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Athlete <input type="checkbox"/> Spectator <input type="checkbox"/> Coach/Assistant Coach <input type="checkbox"/> Support Personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Employee (paid) <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Official (Please specify) .....	
Witnesses (if more than 3 witnesses, attach details to this form)	Name (1): Contact details: Name (2): Contact details: Name (3): Contact details:	
Interim action (if any) taken		
Police contacted	Who: When: Advice provided:	

## **CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**