

GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTING COACHES WHO ARE UNDER 18

Child Safety

OVERVIEW

Young coaches are a valuable part of your club and community. Basketball Victoria encourage and support the development of young people in leadership roles, including coaching.

Younger children often look up to older young people as mentors and with proper support, young people can thrive in their role as a coach, while staying safe and protected. It is your responsibility as a club or association to ensure the environment is safe, supervised, and aligned with Basketball Victoria's safeguarding requirements.

Please note that coaches who are under the age of 18 should not be placed with teams where they are coaching athletes who are older than them.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. YOUNG COACHES ARE STILL CHILDREN

Coaches under 18 are considered children under the Basketball Victoria Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct. All children and young people, including under 18-year-old coaches, must be appropriately supported in line with Basketball Victoria's Child Safeguarding Policy.

2. YOUNG COACHES ARE ROLE MODELS AND IN A POSITION OF AUTHORITY

When coaching younger children, young coaches are placed in positions of authority and must be supported to meet those responsibilities in a safe and appropriate way.

CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES

1. TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- Hold a coaching accreditation course, facilitated by Basketball Victoria
- Provide ongoing training and education so young coaches understand:
 - Their role and boundaries
 - Their responsibility as role models
 - Child safety expectations and reporting procedures
 - And so they can continue to develop in their coaching skills and experience
- Assign a designated adult support person for every under 18 year old coach. This could be a Team Manager or the coaches parent/caregiver.
- Ask the Team Manager to complete the Basketball Australia 'Safeguarding Children in Basketball' course. This is a free online course, details can be found online at australia.basketball:
Safeguarding Children in Basketball

2. SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

- Young coaches must never be left alone with the children they coach.
- An appropriately screened adult (Working with Children Check and other screening as per the Basketball Victoria Child Safeguarding Policy) must always be present at training and games.
- Any online team group parent chats must include both the young coach and/or their parent/guardian.
- Parents on the team should be made aware that if they need to message one on one about their child, this must be sent to the team manager or other designated adult.
- Parents within the team should always be directed to speak to the designated adult (team manager or coaches parent/caregiver) in the first instance. This includes in person discussions as well as phone calls. The designated adult can then facilitate a broader discussion that involves the coach, family and designated adult. Parents should be made aware that they should not approach the junior coach at any time and that all discussions with the coach need to go through, and include, the designated adult.

3. PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Under 18-year-old coaches must abide by the same Professional Boundaries expected of adult coaches.

Under-18-year-old coaches must abide by the Basketball Victoria Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct, including but not limited to not:

- Exhibit any form of favouritism.
- Engage in behaviour that is discriminatory or could be perceived as frightening or causing fear or embarrassment to younger children.
- Have one on one, unsupervised contact with players outside of basketball including in person contact, phone messages or calls, or via social media.
- Engage in inappropriate or mature conversations with any player or use inappropriate language.

Clubs must ensure that young coaches are provided education and guidance in relation to appropriate professional boundaries. Young coaches may find navigating professional boundaries more difficult than adults, due to being closer in age to the players and being children themselves. Young coaches may attend school or extra-curricular activities where they come in contact with the players or the families on their team. It is expected that junior coaches adhere to the same professional boundaries when seeing children outside of basketball that they do while at training or at games. If issues outside of a basketball setting arise, young coaches should be positively supported by the club or association to appropriately navigate these situations.

4. REPORTING AND SAFETY

- Ensure all under-18 coaches know:
 - Who they can go to with concerns (e.g. their adult support person, the club or association Child Safety Officer).
 - How to report unsafe or inappropriate behaviour, including their own safety as a coach, and any safeguarding concerns they may have for a child in their team.

CHECKLIST FOR CLUBS SUPPORTING COACHES UNDER 18

- The young coach has received age-appropriate induction and training
- An adult support person is assigned and accessible
- A screened adult is always present at training and games
- The coach has read and agreed to the Basketball Victoria Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- The young coach understands:
 - How to recognise and report concerning behaviour.
 - How to protect themselves from risky or inappropriate situations

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- Basketball Australia Child Safeguarding Policy
- Basketball Victoria Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct

