

CHILD SAFE

e-Newsletter

December
2025

Welcome to the December 2025 SLSNSW Child Safe e-Newsletter

Thank you to all the Child Safe Coordinators and club members for the effort you've put into starting this season and creating a positive, child-safe environment.



In this edition:

- Building a positive Child Safe Club Culture
- Supporting clubs with Working with Children Check (WWCC) and Child Safe Awareness compliance
- SurfGuard tips – Documenting WWCC exemptions
- Child Safe Awareness course (18 years +) for Patrol Members
- National launch of the Child Safe Awareness course (13-17 years)
- 'Staying Connected Safely' – Social Media Age Restrictions, Guide for Clubs
- Sport is for EVERY body – building body-positive sport environments
- Child Safe training and resources

Tips to empower your members and community to support child safe practices

- **Clear and open communication** with all members, families, carers
- **Introduce changes positively and gradually**, where possible. Urgent or high-risk issues may need more immediate change
- **Focus on positives** – identify and acknowledge child safe practices your club and members are doing well

- **Set realistic and achievable goals** and help build member's confidence to keep improving child safety
- **Listen respectfully to feedback and complaints** – this is a great way to find out areas of concern and support members through times of change
- **Respectfully inform members** that all clubs need to implement the Child Safe Standards as part of adhering to Child Safe legislation and policies.

STANDARD 3

Families and communities are informed and involved – Organisations actively engage with families and communities to support children.

Building a positive Child Safe Club Culture

Remember – open and positive discussions about child safety, highlighting positive outcomes as well as raising concerns, help to build a positive child safe culture.

This has the benefit of;

- Encouraging members that what they are doing is helping child safety
- Encourages children, young people and adult members that it is ok to raise concerns
- Discourages potential offenders who may be in your club or considering joining your club
- Helps to integrate child safety as part of regular safety checks and practices within your club and Surf Life Saving



Supporting clubs with Working with Children Checks (WWCC) and Child Safe Awareness course compliance

STANDARD 5

People working with children are suitable and supported.

SLSNSW is committed to working with clubs and providing support to advise if members need a new or renewed WWCC and/or need to complete the SLSA Child Safe Awareness Course.

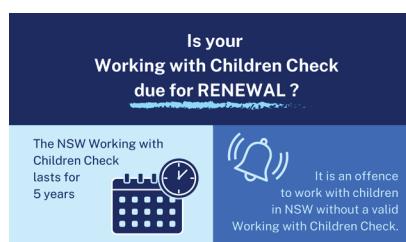
Over the coming months, SLSNSW will complete a review of members in positions that are required to have a WWCC and/or hold the Child Safe Awareness (18+) course. We know some roles have an automatic requirement to complete the Child Safe Awareness course (*Age Managers, Coaches and Officials, TAFs*) so we will be focused on contacting the following position holders:

- **Child Safe Coordinator, Member Protection Information Officer, Complaints Manager, Junior Activity Chairs** – these roles require a WWCC and completion of the Child Safe Awareness Course

- **Club President, Patrol Captains and Patrol Members** – these roles are required to complete the Child Safe Awareness Course

Following the review of member records, SLSNSW will;

- **Email each member** personally to request they complete the WWCC and/or Child Safe Awareness Course
- **Liaise with members and clubs** to support the completion of the requirements and updating SurfGuard



A follow up review and email will be completed in February 2026 and the Child Safe Awareness (18+) course will be part of proficiency for all adult patrol members from the 2026 season.

Club WWCC responsibilities

Please note, clubs MUST;

- Identify** child related roles in their club
- Inform** members if they need a WWCC and/or Child Safe Awareness Course
- Collect** WWCC details from members
- Identify** if a member is exempt from a WWCC (Exemptions can be documented in SurfGuard - see SurfGuard Tips below)
- Create/access** the clubs' Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) employer account for WWCC verifications
- Ensure the club contacts** on the OCG account are club emails and NOT personal emails

Remember - these contacts will be used by the OCG to inform your club if a member with a valid WWCC becomes barred from working with children

- Verify** every WWCC on the OCG website
- Record** the WWCC and verification details in SurfGuard

Please contact us at memberservices@surflifesaving.com.au if you have any questions or concerns about this process.

SurfGuard Tips

Documenting Working with Children Check (WWCC) Exemptions

This information explains what WWCC information to record in the member's Member Protection area in SurfGuard. WWCC exemptions can be documented as a Member Protection note.

- **Member Protection Declaration Form, Date and Expiry Date** – This form is no longer required in NSW, and this information does not need to be recorded in SurfGuard
- **Working with Children Registration / Verification Date** – This is the date the WWCC was verified through your club employer account on the OCG website
- **Working with Children Registration Expiry Date** – This is the date of expiry for the person's WWCC
- **Working with Children Registration No** – This is the person's WWCC number

- **Member Protection note** – Document notes regarding the WWCC verification check outcome or explain why the person is exempt from a WWCC, even

though they are in a child related role e.g. WWCC exemption as they are a parent of a child in the U/8 nippers.

Member Protection

Member Protection Declaration Form: [] Completed

Member Protection Declaration Date:

Member Protection Declaration Expiry Date:

Working with Children Registration / Verification Date:

Working with Children Registration Expiry Date:

Working with Children Registration No:

Member Protection Note:

Screening Withdrawn Date:

Screening Suitability Notice Date:

Screening Type:

National Police Check Application No:

National Police Check Expiry Date:

Child Safe Awareness course (18+) for patrol members is a national requirement in 2026/27 season

STANDARD 7

Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.

Following the NSW decision to mandate the Child Safe Awareness course for all Patrol Members 18 years and over, SLSA have confirmed the course will be a **national requirement** for patrol members from the 2026/27 season and **must be renewed every 3 years**.

Clubs can support members to complete this training by offering links to the SLS Hub via your newsletter or website with a reminder to complete this e-learning course. Members select the Safety and Wellbeing Section and select the SLS - Child Safe Awareness course (18+).

Child Safe Awareness course (13-17 years)

The Child Safe Awareness course (13-17 years) was launched nationally in October. The course can be accessed via the SLS Hub under the Safety and Wellbeing e-learning course options.

This course is for members aged 13-17 years and aims to provide information about how SLS works to keep children and young people safe, how to keep themselves and their peers safe and how to report concerns.



SLS - Child Safe Awareness (13-17 years)
Surf Life Saving



SLS - Child Safe Awareness (18 years +)
Surf Life Saving

Whilst the Child Safe Awareness course is not mandatory for patrol members under 18 years, youth members are strongly encouraged to complete the training.

Renew your Child Safe Awareness award if you have completed it over 3 years ago.

STANDARD 10

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

This standard includes the requirement for child safe policies and procedures to be available in child-friendly and accessible formats that pay attention to children's diverse characteristics, cultural background and abilities.



STAYING CONNECTED SAFELY
Social Media Age Restrictions: Guide for Clubs

WHAT HAS CHANGED?
From 10 December 2020, age-restricted social media platforms will have to take reasonable steps to prevent Australians under the age of 18 from creating or keeping an account.
• As of 5 November 2020, it is illegal to view that Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Threads, TikTok, X, YouTube, and WhatsApp.
• Even though WhatsApp is not currently listed as a restricted platform, it carries child safety risks. For example, private messages between adults and children can happen, and personal details like phone numbers and addresses can be shared.

Clubs can still use public social media pages for general updates, this only affects direct communication.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER FOR CLUBS?
Clubs are meant to communicate with junior members (under 18) and their parents about patrols, training, and events. Using non-compliant apps may put children at risk and breach child safety and privacy rules. While Apps not compliant with the ban there are not Child Safe compliant as they allow the possibility of 1:1 adult and child communication and inappropriate conduct to occur.

By choosing and implementing a safe platform we will ensure clubs adhere to the new restrictions, ensure communications are inclusive and all members receive the information they need it, and we are maintaining a safe environment for children and young people.

WHAT SHOULD CLUBS DO?

1. Check your current tools:
List the tools and platforms used to communicate with under 18s (e.g., patrol groups, training updates, coaching, youth groups, travelling team).
2. Plan to stop using Apps below:
Prepare to phase out platforms that do not meet safety requirements in the 2025 season. Examples of platforms that are not safe to use for 18s:
 - Facebook Groups
 - Messenger
 - Instagram
 - TikTok
 - WhatsApp
 - The club website?
3. Choose a safe platform:
The preferred option is Team App, which is already used by over 4,000 Surf Life Saving groups; however other compliant platforms may be available; check with SLSA for updates.

Things to think about when selecting a platform:

- Is it safe? (e.g., does it have age restrictions between adults and children?)
- Is it compliant? Personal details like phone numbers can be shared in group chats (WhatsApp).
- Is it user friendly?
- Is the club relevant? If clubs can't reach under 18s, they risk losing connection with young members.

4. Tell everyone about the change:
Use the template below to communicate changes to members and parents.

**STAY SAFE. STAY CONNECTED.
MAKE THE SWITCH BEFORE 10 DECEMBER 2025**

'Staying Connected Safely - Social Media Age Restrictions: Guide for Clubs

SLSA have released advice on managing communications with youth members in line with Australia's new Social Media Age Restriction legislation.

You can access the [Guide for Clubs here](#) and support all members by promoting the information and transitioning your communications to child safe platforms that meet the requirements.

**SURF LIFE SAVING
NEW SOUTH WALES**



Sport is for EVERY Body campaign – building body-positive sport environments

A recent Sport Integrity report regarding young people in sport states;

- 26% of young people aged 0-14 years are in sport
- 30% request to leave sport by the age of 15 years
- 1 in 5 have witnessed body shaming in sport in the last 12 months and;
- Body shaming reports can be more common than bullying, racism, discrimination or physical abuse.

The Butterfly Body Kind Youth Survey identified that 34.5% of young people state their body image stopped them engaging in sport or physical activity either 'all of the time' or 'quite a bit' of the time.

Where do body shaming comments come from?

Dr Zali Yager, Executive Director of The Embrace Collective, states that academic research has focused on comments from coaches and team managers, however many young people report they 'overhear' most body shaming comments from other athletes and parents/carers.

Olympic swimming champion, Libby Trickett, states *'over my career, I experienced countless times when my body was the topic of conversation, but I wasn't a part of it.'*

Some comments may appear to be 'positive' for example, 'wow, they can run fast, given their size.' However, research shows that young people exposed to comments that praise or criticize a person's body or appearance, rather than their skills, can result in 'disordered eating, depression and dropping out of sport.'

'Sport is for EVERY body' resources for clubs

Play by the Rules have teamed with The Embrace Collective to provide resources for athletes, coaches, clubs and parents/carers to help promote positive body image among young people in sport.

These resources promote positive language and behaviours around body image in sport to help encourage every young person to feel confident, included and supported.



Training and Resources

- **Sport is for Every BODY**
- [Sport is for Every BODY – Positive body image for young people in sport](#)
This video encourages young people to focus on what their bodies can do, not how they look. It promotes body confidence, inclusion and kindness in sport.
- [Champions video](#)
Hear from our Sport is for Every BODY champions Melissa Wu, Alexandra Kiroi-Bogatyreva and Cam Boland.

- [Coaching for body confidence – Your words matter](#)
This video helps coaches understand how their words can impact young athletes' body confidence. It offers practical ways to build a positive, inclusive team culture.
- [SLSNSW Child Safe Introduction and Implementation webinars](#)
Use the following links to access the SLSNSW Child Safe webinars for more child safe information.

- [Child Safe Introduction Webinar Recording](#) – Passcode: XD0X#&5
- [Child Safe Implementation Webinar Recording](#) – Passcode: koqi#4MB
- **'Staying Connected Safely' – Social Media age restrictions legislation**
 - contact member services for more information on communicating with young people in SLS and the Team App functionality (the platform recommended by SLSA).

Support

Thank you again for all your help with promoting child safe practices in surf life saving.

Please contact us at memberservices@surflifesaving.com.au. We are happy to answer questions and follow up resources as you continue to implement the Child Safe Standards.