

Appendix 12

SA Community Football League

CYBERSAFETY POLICY



Creating a Cybersmart Environment

Social networking sites like Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and YouTube can be a great way for clubs to provide information, promote their sport, their activities and successes.

As with off-line communities, some social media users can act anti-socially and show disrespect for their online community with little consideration of the social and potentially legal implications. Issues like bullying and harassment, unwanted or inappropriate contact, uploading of inappropriate or offensive content can cause issues for individual club members or the club involved.

In the club environment you may choose to promote **cybersafety** by recommending to you members to

- *Use the privacy settings*
- *Keep your private information private.*
- *Think before you post any content, video, images or text, online. You can put it up, but you can't necessarily take it down. Ask before posting images or stories about others. What you see as harmless fun may be embarrassing and humiliating for them and create a poor club image*
- *Don't project an undesirable self-image of yourself or the club*
- *Choose your online friends wisely. Others' inappropriate views and behaviours can reflect badly on you and the club.*
- *Communicate with others as you would do offline, with courtesy and respect.*
- *If you think someone is being bullied or harassed online, speak out.*
If club members are involved speak with your coach or club official. The club will not tolerate this behaviour

Rationale

The SA Community Football League (SACFL) has an obligation to maintain a safe physical and emotional environment for league officials, staff, registered players, umpires, coaches, club members, parents, spectators and sponsors. This responsibility is increasingly being linked to the use of the Internet and Information & Communication Technologies (ICT), and has seen the emergence of a number of related Cybersafety issues. The Internet and ICT devices/equipment bring great benefits to all users and to the effective operation of the SACFL, individual leagues and clubs.

The SACFL places a high priority on the acceptable use of ICT devices/equipment which will benefit members however; it recognises that the presence in the sporting arena of these technologies can also facilitate anti-social, inappropriate, and even illegal behaviour and activities. The SACFL aims, therefore, to maximise the benefits of these technologies, while at the same time to minimise the dangers and manage the risks.

Policy

The SACFL and its member clubs encourage effective and safe Cybersafety practices which aim to maximise the benefits of the Internet and ICT and allow for the effective operation of the SACFL and member leagues and clubs, whilst minimising and managing any risks.

The SACFL takes seriously its responsibility in providing robust policy and guidelines for its members in relation to what is deemed acceptable and appropriate online behaviours. The League and/or club name, motto, crest, logo and/or uniform must not be used in any way which would result in a negative impact for the league or club and its members.

Members of the SACFL and its clubs have a responsibility to ensure that all online communications are in keeping with the leagues expectations in relation to appropriate and respectful interactions with officials, coaches, umpires, players, parents, spectators and sponsors. Players will not post inappropriate comments about individual SACFL or club members which if said in person during the playing of a game would result in disciplinary action being taken.

Images of Children

In South Australia under the Summary Offences Act 1953 a person must not engage in indecent filming. Images of children and adults should not be used inappropriately or illegally.

Wherever possible, obtain permission from a child's parent/guardian before taking an image of a child that is not their own and ensure that the parent knows the way the image will be used. The privacy of others needs to be respected and clubs should disallow the use of camera phones, videos and cameras inside changing areas, showers and toilets.

Clubs or Associations displaying an image of a child should avoid naming or identifying the child or, wherever possible, avoid using both the first name and surname.

Do not display personal information such as residential address, email address or telephone numbers without gaining consent from the parent/guardian.

Additional information such as hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc should not be included as this information can be used as grooming tools by pedophiles or other persons.

It is the responsibility of the organisation to only use appropriate images of a child, relevant to the sport and ensure that the child is suitably clothed in a manner that promotes the sport.

Cyberbullying

“Cyberbullying is a way of delivering covert psychological bullying. It uses information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour, by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.” (Belsey 2007)

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, racially vilifying or threatening another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, phone messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings (including social network sites eg facebook or blogs) and the sending, receiving and/or possession of naked or sexually explicit images of a person. Club members must also be aware that postings from their individual accounts, whether done by themselves or another person will remain the responsibility of the account owner.

All members of the SACFL and individual clubs must be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime has been committed, they may also be subjected to a criminal investigation by Police over which the league and/or club will have no control. This particularly applies to ‘sexting’ where the image is of a person under the age of 18 years whereby Police will be informed immediately a club becomes aware of the situation.

Procedure

SACFL and/or club officials or members who feel that they have been the victims of such misuses of technology should save and store the offending material on their computer, mobile phone or other device. They should then print a copy of the material and immediately report the incident to the relevant club/league representative.

All reports of cyberbullying and other technology misuses will be investigated fully in accordance with SACFL Regulation 5.0 and may result in a notification to Police where the SACFL, league or club is legally obliged to do so.

If the SACFL and/or individual League’s executive receives a complaint about an online issue, the allegations will be forwarded to the relevant League Investigation Officer.

If there is evidence, charges will be laid and the complaint will proceed to the league’s Independent Tribunal, exactly the same as if the investigation relates to physical violence or other reportable offences.

Penalties

Any proven charges will automatically lead to a minimum of a two (2) match suspension for a registered player. In deciding the final penalty, consideration will be given to the seriousness of the act, the impact on the victim, the impact on the club/league/SACFL and the prior good history or otherwise of the player. Players charged with these types of offences for a second or subsequent time and where a suspension has been previously imposed will face deregistration.

Any player presented before the tribunal for the first or subsequent time on a cyberbullying offence must be aware that the penalties available to the tribunal members will cover the complete range including deregistration.

In the case of a non playing club member being proved to have engaged in harassment or bullying, the club employing, engaging or otherwise associated with the person at the time of the conduct shall be deemed to be vicariously liable for the conduct of the person and shall pay to the League a penalty to be determined by the league.

Important terms used in this document:

- (a) The abbreviation ‘ICT’ in this document refers to the term ‘Information, Communication and Technologies.
- (b) ‘Cybersafety’ refers to the safe and responsible use of the Internet and ICT equipment/devices, including mobile phones
- (c) The term ‘ICT equipment/devices’ used in this document, includes but is not limited to, computers (such as desktops, laptops, PDAs), storage devices (such as USB and flash memory devices, CDs, DVDs, floppy disks, iPods, MP3 players), cameras (such as video, digital, webcams), all types of mobile phones, video and audio players/receivers (such as portable CD and DVD players), Gaming Consoles, and any other, similar, technologies as they come into use.