

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Guidelines

for IMMAF, National Federations, IMMAF Licensed Event Organisers and Partner Organizations working with IMMAF

Introduction

Children have the right to participate in sport in a safe and enjoyable environment. Their rights are established by United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child, adopted by General Assembly Resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989.

Youth development and their involvement in the organized and structured Mixed Martial Arts events is one of priorities of IMMAF, therefore we adopted the International Standards on Safeguarding Children and Young people and enforce them on all IMMAF member federations.

Those standards include

- formulation of policy
- allocation of the roles and responsibilities on IMMAF staff and associates,
- implementation of safeguarding procedures,
- monitoring and reviewing of safeguarding measures

IMMAF Policy Outline

1. Is fully committed to the gender responsive safeguarding of all children and young people from all forms of violence and/or abuse.
2. Is responsible to ensure that we, as an organization, and anyone who represents us does not in any way harm, abuse or commit any other act of violence against children and young people or place them at risk of the same.
3. Is promoting child and youth safe practices,
4. Will not tolerate any form of discrimination and exclusion
5. Will ensure that everyone who work with IMMAF understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities while working with children and young people
6. Will apply necessary actions against any member of staff, associate or visitor who commits act of abuse or violence against a child.

These guidelines outline the requirements for safeguarding children and young people that are applicable to organizations that work with IMMAF in carrying out our sports, educational and development programmes involving children and young people.

The guidelines illustrate our commitment to support and respect children's and young people's rights to be protected from harm, and to provide a safe and protective environment for children and young people who are involved with any IMMAF events or programmes.

Guidelines

The guidelines should be applied in relation to children and/or young people as appropriate, depending on the group the organization works with.

1. Prevention:

IMMAF itself and member - national federations must take appropriate measures to manage child and/or youth safeguarding risk factors and prevent abuse and exploitation before it occurs. Prevention measures should include organizational safeguarding policies, codes of conduct and associated procedures; the management of safeguarding risks in relation to its operations, activities and interventions; and the production and promotion of 'child and young person friendly' safeguarding information and resources.

2. Code of Conduct:

IMMAF itself and member - national federations are required to ensure that their personnel avoid any behaviour or conduct that compromises the safety and protection of children and/or young people within its activities, operations and programmes. In addition, programmes and activities working directly with children and/or young people or involving direct contact between the same should develop guidance on expected and acceptable behaviour for children and/or young people towards each other. This should be incorporated into policy and practice documents. IMMAF has produced a template document for IMMAF Events which is available to National Federations and other entities working with IMMAF on request.

3. Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination:

IMMAF itself and member - national federations should ensure that all Safeguarding Children and/or Young People policies and procedures take into account gender equality and nondiscrimination requirements. Recognising that girls, boys, young women, young men, and children and young people of different gender identities may face different risks relating to their safety and protection and that all children and/or young people have an equal right to protection, irrespective of: age, sex, gender, gender identity, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, race, language, religious or political beliefs, marital status, disability, physical or mental health, family, socio-economic or cultural background, or class.

4. Radicalization:

IMMAF is fully committed to the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Radicalization is defined as the act or process of making a person more radical or favouring of extreme or fundamental changes in political, economic, or social conditions, institutions, or habits of the mind. Extremism is defined as the holding of extreme political or religious views.

IMMAF, and its member federations, must be constantly vigilant and remain fully informed about the risk of radicalization affecting the sport of MMA, especially amongst vulnerable young people. Any issues connected to radicalization must be referred to IMMAF, and national member federation Integrity units for immediate action.

5. Screening Procedures:

There should be detailed screening procedures for all personnel (including unpaid volunteers) who meet children and/or young people (directly or indirectly). Screening procedures should be as available in each country and updated on a regular basis, where possible. Screening procedures may include: certificate of good conduct, police reference checks or equivalent, verification that applicants are not listed in national registries of child offenders; a detailed application and interview process; references who support the applicant's suitability to work with children and/or young people.

6. Awareness:

IMMAF itself and member - national federations should ensure that all personnel, subcontractors or consultants or affiliates involved with children and young people's programmes are aware of safeguarding risks, policies and procedures; and their safeguarding responsibilities. In addition, children and/or young people need to be engaged with and their parents, guardians or carers should be informed as well so that they all know what behaviour to expect/accept and how to report any concerns.

7. Capacity Building:

Each IMMAF member - national federation should develop the capacity of all who work with and for children and/or young people to appropriately prevent, detect, report and respond to safeguarding concerns and particularly as they pertain to differing gender and other identities. Efforts should be made to ensure organizational policies and practices are understood and can be effectively implemented through mandatory inductions and on-going training courses for all employees and volunteers and other associates.

8. Reporting Mechanisms for children and/or young people and Staff:

Each IMMAF member - national federation should establish a mechanism for the safe reporting of safeguarding concerns. Such mechanisms should ensure appropriate escalation of concerns within the organization, referral to the appropriate authorities and confidentiality. In addition, child and youth reporting mechanisms should be accessible, friendly, and sensitive to their differing needs

9. Response and Follow Up:

Each IMMAF member - national federation organizational policies and procedures should include appropriate measures to support and protect children and/or young people when concerns arise. All measures taken to respond to a safeguarding concern should take into account the best interest of the child or young person and be sensitive to their differing gender and other identities ensuring they are kept safe and protected. Concerns should be written up and information kept in accordance with the privacy and confidentiality policies of the Organization and/or local legislation. In addition, organizational processes should ensure response evaluation and follow up for organizational learning.

10. Implementation, Monitoring and Review:

IMMAF itself and member - national federations should review Safeguarding Children and/Young People Policy at regular intervals as determined necessary by the Organization, preferably at least every three (3) years, where possible.

11. Sanction and Discipline of Organization personnel:

IMMAF and member - national federations' policies and procedures should provide for appropriate sanctions and disciplinary measures to ensure that children and young people are protected from further potential harm. This may include immediate suspension of personnel while the allegations are followed up and either substantiated or refuted and/or where personnel is convicted of abusing a child or young person, said person is immediately terminated with cause from his or her position.

12. Informed Consent:

Each IMMAF member - national federation should provide children and/or young people (and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) where applicable), with all necessary details (including on any associated risk,) to make an informed decision regarding their participation in programmes and activities, including any voice recordings, video or photographs of children and/or young people (including how and where these will be used). Participation and/or usage of information and/or images should only take place after consent is obtained.

13. Protection of Personal Information:

Personal information regarding any Child or children and/or young people, whether or not such information is obtained as part of the programmes involving children and/or young people, should be treated confidentially. There should be clear procedures showing the responsibilities within the organization for accessing and using such data with appropriate authorisations. In addition, such data should not be disclosed to any third party, except in accordance with the policies of the each IMMAF member - national federation or as required by applicable local laws. Personal information includes, but is not limited to, any information that can be linked to or used to identify a Child and/or Young Person.

14. Working with partners:

IMMAF itself and member - national federations should ensure adequate safeguarding assessments are made as part of its due diligence processes when it comes to partnership working. Third party entities that are contracted or supported to work with children must be subject to the same safeguarding principles and approach outlined in the Organizations policy and procedures. Vendors, suppliers and other contractors that may be in direct or indirect contact with children must also be subject to appropriate safeguarding measures.