

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. The Mountain Club of South Africa's safeguarding policy is to ensure that all participants can join the club's activities without fear of harassment or abuse, that the beneficiaries of our programmes are safe and secure, and that incidents of all natures are reported and investigated.
2. The key objective of this policy is to achieve the position that the MCSA can:
 - 2.1. ensure all parties involved in the club and our programmes understand that all forms of harassment and abuse are unacceptable and will not be tolerated;
 - 2.2. implement effective measures that minimise the likelihood of incidents of harassment and abuse;
 - 2.3. ensure all reasonable steps are taken during the recruitment of volunteers and other helpers to prevent unsuitable people from getting into contact with our beneficiaries and volunteers;
 - 2.4. ensure that everyone involved in club activities always act in accordance with existing law and policy relating to child abuse management;
 - 2.5. ensure an appropriate and coordinated response to any incidents of harassment or abuse;
 - 2.6. ensure that anyone who has witnessed or experienced harassment or abuse, while attending a club activity, has the ability to report the incident without fear of victimisation.
3. *(Abuse refers to any form of abuse or harassment which may occur either in isolation or in combination. These are, but not limited to psychological abuse; physical abuse; sexual harassment; sexual abuse; neglect, or bullying based on any number of grounds, including race, religion, colour, creed, ethnic origin, physical attributes, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic status, and ability. It can be a once-off incident or a series of incidents and can be in person or online.)*
4. The MCSA recognises that it has a responsibility as set out in the National Sports and Recreation Act No.110 of 1998) as amended, section 6(1) which reads "*National federations must assume full responsibility for the safety issues within their sport and recreation disciplines.*"
5. In addition, the Children's Act 38 of 2005 as amended, requires a person who has no parental responsibilities and rights in respect of a child but who voluntarily cares for the child either indefinitely, temporarily or partially, including a caregiver who

otherwise has no parental responsibilities and rights in respect of a child, must, while the child is in that person's care, safeguard the child's health and development; and protect the child from maltreatment, abuse, neglect, degradation, discrimination, exploitation, and any other physical, emotional or mental harm or hazards.

6. **Policy regarding children and vulnerable adults**

- 6.1. The MCSA safeguarding policy is in place to protect children and vulnerable adults who participate in our Outreach and Community activities. All volunteers are to be made aware of the contents of the policy before they participate in our activities.
- 6.2. To this end the MCSA will endeavour to ensure that in respect of volunteers involved with children and or outreach programmes:
 - 6.2.1. all volunteers should be vetted by the relevant sub-committee;
 - 6.2.2. all volunteers who participate in overnight activities should submit a police clearance certificate;
 - 6.2.3. no volunteer should be left alone with a child or vulnerable adult, except in an emergency situation;
 - 6.2.4. no volunteer should communicate with a child or vulnerable adult outside our programme without the knowledge of the sub-committee convenor(s), parent(s), guardian(s), or social worker(s).
- 6.3. In addition, the MCSA will endeavour to ensure that members and volunteers:
 - 6.3.1. treat children with respect and provide opportunities to teach children their rights and responsibilities, and empower them to best use the knowledge;
 - 6.3.2. create an environment that is favourable and safe for children to share their concerns;
 - 6.3.3. encourage child participation in decision-making and programme development;
 - 6.3.4. are aware of and manage situations that present a risk to children;
 - 6.3.5. plan and organise work procedures and environments to minimise the risks to children;
 - 6.3.6. encourage an attitude of openness amongst members and volunteers so that best practice is aspired to, and potential abusive behaviour can be averted and used as a learning opportunity;
 - 6.3.7. always be visible to other adults when interacting with children;
 - 6.3.8. report immediately to a section committee member any suspicion that a child could be at risk of harm or abuse.
 - 6.3.9. do not publish photographs of beneficiaries on any media platforms, unless their faces are obscured or blurred, or written permission has been obtained from parent(s)/ caregiver(s). The written consent must be kept on file indefinitely.

- 6.4. Furthermore, the MCSA will endeavour to ensure that members and volunteers do not:
- 6.4.1. discriminate against, show differential treatment to, or favour particular children in preference to others;
 - 6.4.2. act in ways that are abusive or place children at risk of abuse;
 - 6.4.3. physically assault, hit or abuse children;
 - 6.4.4. engage in rough or physical contact with a child, unless it is permitted within the rules of the game or activity;
 - 6.4.5. develop sexual relationships with children, or use sexual innuendo to exploit or abuse them;
 - 6.4.6. use language, make suggestions or offer advice, which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
 - 6.4.7. invite children to provide their personal contact information;
 - 6.4.8. discuss personal issues about a child or their family with other people except the designated safeguarding officers, and community workers and designated authorities (i.e. statutory social worker or police);
 - 6.4.9. share reports of alleged abuse with anyone other than those mentioned above;
 - 6.4.10. offer to transport children in members' personal vehicles without the parents' written permission or another adult present in fulfilling your duties at work;
 - 6.4.11. transport passengers (children) in a vehicle in contravention of any law or regulation;
 - 6.4.12. allow children to participate in activities and programmes without the written consent of the child's parent or legal guardian.