



OVERNIGHT FOOTBALL ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

Sporting tournaments and trips play a significant role in a child and/or young person's life – it forms part of their development and independence, creates a sense of team spirit and belonging and builds life skills in a safe and supported environment.

The AFL is committed to offering these important experiences to children and young people who participate in Australian Football.

Who should use this document?

These guidelines provide information to event organisers, supervision staff, families and participating children and young people to ensure their safety and wellbeing is prioritised and their experiences are both enjoyable and memorable.

DEFINITIONS

Overnight activity: any trip or activity related to football that requires a child or young person to engage in overnight travel.

Child or young person: any person under the age of 18 who is participating in the overnight activity.

Supervising adult: any adult who is responsible for the supervision of children or young people during the overnight activity. This can include a parent who is providing supervision for part of the trip (e.g. not travelling with the group but will supervise them for a day or night of the trip).



PLANNING GUIDELINES

SUPERVISING ADULTS

When planning an overnight activity you should ensure that any person accompanying a team with children and young people has:

- a valid Working with Children Check or State/Territory equivalent that is registered with the club or association they are representing
- received a copy of the relevant child safeguarding policy and code of conduct and has read and signed the code of conduct (AFL, club, league or association)
- a copy of these guidelines and has participated in at least one planning meeting with the other supervising adults
- undertaken safeguarding training
- undertaken additional inclusion training as required (eg, cultural awareness training, supporting children with additional needs).



SUPERVISION

SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

Supervision will be required when:

- travelling – flights, trains or buses
- transport – minibuses, tour buses, cars, ubers and taxis (note young people should not be transported in an uber or taxi without a supervising adult)
- in public spaces – crossing roads, embarking/ disembarking from public transport
- travel breaks (rest stops, lunch venues, etc)
- accommodation (upon arrival, during down time and overnight)
- all meal venues
- sporting facilities (upon arrival and during the day).

RATIOS

Each team should be supervised by a minimum of two adults with a minimum of one adult of the same gender as the children and/or young people. For high-risk activities (travelling and games) a third adult should be available to assist or relieve one adult. Where possible, always try to have a balance of gendered supervision. If children or young people attending an overnight stay have additional requirements based on culture, ethnicity, physical or medical needs this also needs to be considered in terms of sufficient and appropriate supervision ratios.

SUPERVISION PLAN

A plan regarding the supervision of children and young people must be completed prior to leaving. This plan should set a clear understanding of what supervision is required, how and when it will be provided and by whom.

The plan should cover:

- shifts of supervision ensuring they are appropriately shared between supervising adults
- times for meals, wake up, lights out, training, rest and team meetings
- limitations for ‘free time’ what is ok, what is not ok and who is responsible for enforcing this
- boundaries including expectations of behaviour, responding to inappropriate behaviour and agreed disciplinary processes.

RESOURCES FOR SUPERVISORS

At all times, supervising adults must have access to:

- emergency contact information for all people travelling including adults
- contact details and addresses for all venues including accommodation and transport services
- a qualified first aider and a complete and up to date first aid kit
- 24-hour local or online medical support services
- local or online crisis mental health support services (see contact numbers in supervision plan).

i All supervising adults should be aware if a child or young person has a specific medical condition (eg asthma, diabetes or allergies) and any individual medical treatment plans/medication administration instructions. A supervising adult who is also a qualified first aider may undertake this role of medication management and oversight on the trip. Where medication is administered to a child or young person, a record should be kept of dosage, frequency, times and administering adult.



COMMUNICATION

There are important messages and key information to disseminate prior to travelling with children and young people for football related activities, to ensure everyone is prepared and expectations and processes are clear. Remember, this can be a highly anxious and stressful time for children, young people and their families, so clear, consistent and timely communication is vital.

Planning and preparing will help to ensure the activity runs smoothly, but it is important that during the trip all supervising adults continue to be proactive and alert to issues that may arise. The plan, schedule, and agreed approach to the activity matters.

All children and young people on an overnight stay must be informed before and throughout the event that they have the right to contact a parent or guardian at any time during the event, and for any reason.

All families must be able to contact a supervising adult throughout the duration of the trip if required.

Below is a useful table to guide you through the types of information and appropriate timeframes to deliver key messages to each target audience.

WHO	BETWEEN 1-3 MONTHS OUT	LESS THAN 1 MONTH OUT	1 WEEK OUT	DURING
SUPERVISING ADULTS	Dates and locations of trip National State and Community Football Policy Handbook Overnight Guidelines Supervision Plan Travel and accommodation Proposed itinerary	Family contact details Emergency contacts (local medical services, hospitals)	Supervising schedule available - final adjustments to be made	Supervising schedule available and up to date Addressing specific needs of children and young people (cultural, religious, physical)
FAMILIES	Dates and locations of trip	Confirm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travel arrangements ▪ Accommodation arrangements ▪ Room allocations Administrative requirements (emergency contact, signed forms etc) Medical requirements Ticket arrangements Proposed trip itinerary	Any significant changes to original plan Specific times for departure and return Finalised contacts for supervising adults Confirmed trip itinerary	Group updates Individual contact as required Any significant changes to original plan Any incidents or issues as required
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE	Dates and locations of trip	Confirm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travel arrangements ▪ Accommodation arrangements ▪ Room allocations 	Expectations/Signed code of conduct on the trip Packing requirements Ticket(s)/passes	Reinforce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expectations ▪ Safety procedures ▪ Schedule



BOUNDARIES

You are responsible for children and young people who are away from their home and without their families. You are with them during hours usually supervised by their parents, such as bedtime and mealtimes. This can feel quite personal for supervising adults and children and young people, so applying professional boundaries is essential in safely supporting them in the absence of their families.

Professional boundaries on overnight activities include:

- making sure children and young people understand your role, especially if it is different due to the overnight activity (eg. if you are a parent helping as a supervising adult, rather than a coach who already has a clearly defined role)
- act professionally - friendly but not a friend
- treat everyone in the team fairly and not singling anyone out or favouring one child or young person
- not entering the bedroom of a child or young person unless it is an emergency and you are accompanied by one or more other supervising adults
- not drinking alcohol or consuming drugs (illicit or prescribed) in the presence of children and young people
- being fully dressed and/or appropriately clothed when in the presence of children and young people.



CONTACT

Physical contact may be required during overnight activities and trips when it relates to games, training, fitness and safety, as it would in general football activities. However, outside of the game, there is little requirement for physical contact with children and young people during an overnight activity. As discussed earlier, this is a time of day usually reserved for families and can be considered quite personal, so physical contact should be minimal, always appropriate to the situation and always in full sight of another supervising adult. See the table below for a reminder of appropriate and inappropriate physical contact.



APPROPRIATE

Physical touch that is normal for football and happens in front of other people and with the child or young person's consent.

This can include tackling, demonstrating skills and techniques, preventing injury, or keeping them safe, or high fives or a pat on the back to celebrate a win.



INAPPROPRIATE

Any touch a child or young person does not consent to, or that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Any touch that seems sexual, involves a child or young person's private parts, or embarrasses them.

Any touch that happens in a private place like the changerooms, hotel room or a car.



ENVIRONMENT

Overnight activities generally take place across a number of environments. These include but are not limited to airports, planes, buses, city streets, campgrounds, hotel rooms and lobbies, restaurants and football facilities.

Some environments are considered to be a higher risk to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people than others, so additional strategies need to be applied to reduce these risks. Supervision and communication are key strategies to reduce risks, particularly during transit and in public spaces.

Given the personal nature of a hotel, where children and young people are required to shower, change and sleep, significant planning is required to ensure the risks associated with accommodation are considered and mitigated as best as possible.

ACCOMMODATION

In addition to criteria such as cost and location, it is important to consider the following, when booking accommodation for children and young people:

- Can everyone in your group physically access the accommodation?
- What is nearby? Pubs, nightclubs and late-night venues? Public thoroughfare?
- Are there other groups staying at the same time that would be best avoided? For example: bucks party or other large groups.
- If so, is this going to add risks or challenges to providing adequate supervision?
- Can the rooms be booked together preferably side by side on the same floor?
- Will the adult rooms be at the end, to provide adequate supervision at night?
- Does the accommodation have adequate fire safety and emergency evacuation procedures, secure storage in rooms and clear policies regarding smoking and alcohol?
- Are the minibars and adult movie channels inaccessible?
- Is there a balcony or accessible windows?
- Is there a safe and common space for the group to congregate?

ROOM ALLOCATION

Every child or young person must be provided with appropriate sleeping arrangements that do not expose them to any risk of harm, or other unsafe behaviour by an adult or peer.

Rooms should be allocated prior to the trip and communicated to the children, young people and families. It is important to give consideration to the following, when allocating rooms for children and young people:

- Age and gender – children and young people should be allocated a room with a teammate of the same age and gender. Transgender athletes should be consulted on their preference.
- Every person should have their own bed.
- Children and young people are likely to feel more comfortable when allocated a room with a friend or teammate of their choice, however this may not always be possible. Think about personalities and dynamics to minimise risk of conflict or behavioural issues.
- Children and young people requiring carers are provided adequate access and proximity.
- Siblings are offered an opportunity to be allocated a room together.
- Children and young people must only share a room with an adult if their parent is present in that room. This may occur on rare occasions where children and adults need to camp in one area eg overnight camp at a local community hall.
- Supervising adults should avoid entering a child or young person's room alone unless in an emergency. Alternatively, they should stay at the door to provide assistance or communicate with another supervising adult present.
- Children and young people should not be alone in a supervising adult's room unless another supervising adult is present.



RESPONDING TO MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

With basic education and support, you can appropriately respond to a child or young person who presents with mental health concerns. Providing immediate support and making contact with family or an appropriate support person is the first step.

If you have concerns about a child or young person you should:

- Stop what you are doing, put down any devices and give the child or young person your full attention.
- Listen to them.
- Validate their feelings (you don't have to have the solutions).

- Stay calm and try to be non-judgemental.
- Reassure them that mental health issues are common and that self-help is available through school counsellors, Headspace, Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800), Lifeline (131 114), Youth Beyond Blue, and Mind Matters.
- Contact a parent or guardian.

If a child or young person tells you that they want to hurt themselves or that they want to end their life you should seek professional help immediately:

- Phone 000 if a child is at immediate risk.
- Go straight to a hospital emergency department.
- Contact the local psychiatric triage service.



RAISING OR RESPONDING TO SAFETY CONCERNS

Any safety concern or complaint that arises during an overnight activity must be dealt with sensitively, promptly and confidentially. For detailed information regarding raising and/or responding to safety concerns, see **AFL Safe Footy Guidelines - Raising a Safety Concern**.

If a child, young person, a travelling family member or another person not connected to the team raises a concern, reports abuse or makes a complaint to a supervising adult, the supervising adult is expected to follow the process below.

RECOGNISE

Recognise when a child or young person is at risk. Know the signs, the indicators and the red flags. Listen to what a child or young person is telling you. Look out for **DISCLOSURES, ALLEGATIONS or SUSPICIONS**.

RESPOND

Respond calmly and sensitively to a child or young person if they tell you about something that has happened to them. Believe them, listen to them, reassure them, and take them seriously.

Avoid asking leading questions. Just make sure they are safe and let them know you will do something to help them.

REPORT

SAY SOMETHING. Even if you have not spoken directly with a child or young person but you have a **SUSPICION** that something is not right, it is important you say something.



You can:

Speak directly with someone you trust in football like a coach, team manager, umpire, official or club representative.



Use this QR code to raise a concern with the AFL.



Write down your concerns and pass them onto your club or association via email or a letter.

As always if anyone is in immediate danger contact the police on 000.



OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

PRIOR TO LEAVING

- Plan ahead - make sure all supervising adults know the plan and stick to it.
- Complete a risk assessment (up to one month in advance) and know what your blind-spots may be and how to mitigate them.
- Communicate with each other, your team and their families as required.
- Consider any additional needs of the children and young people on the overnight activity eg. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's cultural safety needs, inclusion of children and young people with a disability, those from linguistically diverse and/or multicultural backgrounds or those who identify as LGBTI+, transgender or non-binary.
- Have all your paperwork in order prior to the event/overnight stay for eg,
 - travel permission forms
 - identified medical needs of children and young people
- Register of supervising adults Working with Children's Checks, Code of Conduct and first aid certificates.
- Remind children and young people of their rights and responsibilities (www.afl.com.au/policies).
- Create a resource folder with links to and/or information and guidelines to help you manage challenging situations.
- Complete a final safety check a couple of days before the event to ensure no additional risks have arisen.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

- Allow time for everyone to settle into their rooms, making sure all children and young people are familiar with the supervising adults rooms and all exits.
- Get together to go over the schedule, processes and expected behaviours and the consequences.
- Check in with any child or young person you know or believe may be anxious or worried.
- Check minibars are empty, adult tv channels are inaccessible and rooms have lockable storage available.
- Check all doors and locks both internally and externally are in good working order.
- Ensure that all members of the party have keys and/or access codes.

WHILE YOU ARE THERE

- Follow the relevant Code of Conduct.
- Maintain privacy for children and young people in change rooms and washroom areas.
- Ensure you have adequate supervision of the children and young people at all times.
- Actively prevent any child or young person being exposed to any form of unsafe behaviour.
- In addition to the expected behaviours of adults outlined in the **Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy** and **Code of Conduct**, supervising adults must also:
 - not consume alcohol, consume drugs (illicit or prescribed) while supervising children and young people or in their presence
 - not be left alone with a child or young person unless absolutely necessary, and other supervising adults are informed and agree it is necessary. Where possible, parents should also be informed. Eg: A young athlete has left their gear back at the hotel and both coach and manager are required at the training session. The remaining supervising adult might accompany that young athlete back to the hotel to collect their bag, however the supervising adult must not enter the room.
- Check in regularly with your footy club or governing body.
- Make sure a supervising adult is always contactable.
- Ensure all disciplinary responses to behaviour are agreed by all parties and must not be of a punitive nature or include shaming of a child or young person in front of their peers or other team members. Positive and affirmative support will be more effective.
- Make a record of any incidents if they arise.
- Ensure a supervising adult with first aid training is always available.
- Support each other with challenging situations and ensure everyone gets a break.
- Children and young people will perform better if they feel safe and are included and enjoying themselves - so don't get too serious!
- Offer opportunities for leadership roles or tasks to participating children and young people, to engage them in the planning process and provide them with a sense of ownership and responsibility for the trip.
- Access additional support from your club or governing body if you need.



In case of an emergency, familiarise yourself and follow the steps for Responding to Mental Health Concerns and Responding to Safety Concerns, seek support from your club or association and use emergency services if required.

EXAMPLE OF SUPERVISION PLAN

This plan should set a clear understanding of what supervision is required, how and when it will be provided and by whom.

SUPERVISING ADULTS

Supervising Adult 1 (SA 1):

Name	Role	Phone

Supervising Adult 2 (SA 2):

Name	Role	Phone

Supervising Adult 3 (SA 3):

Name	Role	Phone

Club, League, Association or Governing Body Primary Contact:

Name	Role	Phone

Any person accompanying a team with children or young people under the age of 18 must have:

	SA 1	SA 2	SA 3

- a Working with Children Check or State/Territory equivalent and this must be registered with the club, league, association they are representing
- received and read the relevant Code of Conduct, signed the acknowledgement and returned it to the club, association or governing body they are representing
- received and read a copy (hard or electronic) of these guidelines
- undertaken Safeguarding Children and Young People training
- accessed and read the Safe Footy Guidelines for Coaches & Managers / AFL Workforce and familiarise themselves with their responsibilities and the behaviours expected of them while interacting with children and young people
- First Aid Certificate (at least one supervising adult)
- Mental Health First Aid (at least one supervising adult)

RATIOS

Ratios for travelling with any team that includes children and young people under the age of 18:

- a minimum of two supervising adults at all times accompanying the team with a minimum of one adult of the same gender as the children and/or young people



EXAMPLE OF SUPERVISION SHIFTS

Ensure there are at least two supervising adults allocated to each shift and breaks; and rests are fairly distributed.

TRAVEL SUPERVISION

All supervising adults will be responsible for supervision of children and young people while travelling to and from the football activities on buses, trains or flights including waiting periods, acknowledging that at times one supervising adult may need to leave the group to attend to travel admin requirements like checking in, following up on luggage or collecting transport.

It is important to note that a bus driver is not considered a supervising adult and two other adults should be available for supervision whilst traveling in a bus.

EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

	DAY 1		DAY 2		DAY 3		DAY 4		DAY 5	
Wake up 7am	<i>Manager</i>	<i>SA3</i>								
Breakfast 7:30am	<i>Manager</i>	<i>SA3</i>								
Morning 9am - 12pm	<i>Coach</i>	<i>Manager</i>								
Lunch 12pm - 2pm	<i>SA3</i>	<i>Coach</i>								
Afternoon 2pm - 6pm	<i>Coach</i>	<i>Manager</i>								
Dinner 6:30pm	<i>SA3</i>	<i>Manager</i>								
Evening 7:30-9:30pm	<i>Coach</i>	<i>SA3</i>								
Lights out 10pm	<i>Coach</i>	<i>SA3</i>								
Bed time 10pm - 12pm	<i>Coach</i>	<i>Manager</i>								

NOTES / COMMENTS:

EXAMPLE OF FREE TIME

FREE TIME	WHERE	OPTIONS	SUPERVISING ADULTS
Tuesday afternoon 2-5pm	At tournament	Team can do their own thing but must stay onsite.	Coach & Manager
Friday morning 9-11am	Shopping centre	Team will be allowed to shop before we leave.	Manager and Supervising Adult 3.

NOTES / COMMENTS:

BEHAVIOUR

Children and young people must be reminded of the expectations regarding their behaviour:

PLAY FAIR: Show respect to everyone around you – peers, coaches and umpires.

PLAY SAFE: Prioritise safety, yours, and the people around you, always.

PLAY KIND: Be inclusive, patient, and welcoming, especially to newcomers.

Supervising adults agree to the following response to inappropriate behaviour:

- Reminder to all
- Private reminder to individual(s)
- Second private reminder with additional supervision
- Contact with parents
- Contact with club, league, association or governing body

The response is best provided by the supervising adult with the best relationship with the child or young person involved.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AROUND BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Are there any specific requirements or considerations for individual children or young people with additional needs?
- Are there any conflict or dynamic issues that need to be considered when managing challenging behaviours?

NOTES / COMMENTS: