

Coaches & Officials: Safe Practices: Supervision

This resource provides references to and examples of Prohibited Behaviour as addressed in [BBNZ's Safeguarding Policy](#).

For the purpose of this resource, the term Young Athletes refers to children and young people under the age of 18 who are involved in our sport.

Supervision of young athletes in basketball.

During the time that you are responsible for a young athlete (arrival, during and finishing training, clinics, games or tournaments and/or until they are in the care of their family or another responsible adult) you are required to maintain adequate supervision.

The level of supervision of young athletes required will vary depending on:

- Your role – Are you a coach, manager or team official at practice or a game? Or a staff member at the stadium?
- If they have consent from their parent to play / train unsupervised
- Their age
- Their developmental stage – do they have a disability that requires them to have additional supervision?
- The other members in their team – are they also children? Are they familiar adults?

Supervision of young athletes on overnight trips including travel, transport and accommodation requires a higher level of supervision.

Support and advice regarding overnight travel is provided in the Safety Practices and Procedures section of [BBNZ's Safeguarding Policy](#).



If you are required to maintain direct supervision of a young athlete, you must ensure:

- You have a Line of Sight – you can always see them, even if they are a bit further down the courts.
- You have reasonable supervision ratios based on the age, gender and size of the group.
- Any trainings/competitions/events are open to observation by parents and families – this creates an environment of transparency and safety.
- One-to-one unsupervised situations with young athletes are avoided, except in an emergency or for formal reasons such as private lessons. Even then: - private can still be in view of others - transparency is key. Having parents or family members watch private lessons from afar is a safeguarding measure but also enables them to see what the young athlete is working on.
- Young athletes are given privacy to use the bathroom or change rooms – for younger children in a publicly shared facility you could check the bathrooms are empty first and wait outside in an open space.
- You are not distracted by phones or other people when responsible for supervising young athletes, meaning you always have a line of sight of those in your care, where reasonable and practical.

NOTE! It is acknowledged that sometimes parents and family members presence can hinder growth and development and the work you are doing to create a safe environment. Parents and families can still be invited to observe for transparency reasons, but perhaps they are asked to sit further away to avoid interruptions and to have less impact on the experience of the young athlete.

If you cannot consistently maintain a level of supervision for any reason, you will need to seek additional support from another responsible person.

Drop off and pick up for young athletes in basketball.

Risks associated with drop off and pick up are easily mitigated with some simple steps and a proactive approach.

- Make sure drop off and collection times (or change of location) are clearly communicated to parents and families.
- Arrive early.
- Don't finish or leave earlier than scheduled.
- Communicate with parents and families when there is to be a change in finishing time.
- Wait until the last young athlete is collected before you leave.
- Keep a register of family emergency contact numbers and always have access to a phone.



Tips for managing late pick ups

When a parent or family member is over 15 minutes late to collect their child, you should:

- Attempt to contact them via phone.
- Ask the second to last young athlete and their parent or another club or association member to wait also, to avoid being left alone.
- Contact a club coach, supervisor or team official if the young athlete is not collected within a reasonable time frame.
- Follow up with the family afterwards to ensure they are clear on the pick-up times and confirm they have a backup plan.
- Contact police if you cannot contact a parent or other family member.

Do not leave any child or young person alone.

Involvement of whānau and guardians

In basketball, involvement from parents or family members can vary significantly.

The level of involvement of parents and families can depend on many things including:

- The young athlete – their age, developmental capacity, maturity, experience, and their confidence in being left alone.
- The parent – their interest / experience in basketball, their availability, and their confidence in leaving their child alone.
- The team members – their relationship with the young athlete, how supportive and comfortable they are playing with this team, their relationship with the parents.
- The environment – is the club or association generally a safe and welcoming place for young athletes, what else is on that day (adult competitions, social events).



Regardless of the level of involvement from parents and families, there are some requirements and strategies that help ensure the young athlete's safety is the priority:

NON – NEGOTIABLE INVOLVEMENT from parents or family members

- Any significant decision making regarding the young athlete.
- Signing of any documentation in relation to their child's participation (for example, registration, overnight stays, photos/videos, sanctions, reports).
- Always being available as an emergency contact.
- Drop and pick up – or responsible for arranging this

PARTIAL INVOLVEMENT from parents or family members

- Where possible, conduct all training sessions and lessons in open locations so parents and family members can choose to observe (even if from a distance!).
- Checking in with parents after training or game to provide updates on progress or discuss any concerns.
- Inviting parents or family members to be involved in club or association social events or competitions or tournaments so they can see how the club is running and observe their child in the basketball environment.

Parents and family members in official roles

- Be clear about roles and the expectations and regulations regarding parental involvement for those in official roles
- Request, sight, and file the relevant screening documents (Police Check or equivalent) for any parent or family member volunteering to travel with young athletes.

Behaviour of parents and families

- Regularly remind parents and family members of the behaviour expectations especially if you are concerned about their conduct and the impact it may be having on a young athlete.
- Remind parents and families that their behaviour impacts not only their own child's experience but the experience of other young athletes around them.
- Facilitate information nights or online webinars to discuss expectations of parents and families regularly.
- Have signage around to help with this.

Placing young athletes at the centre.

- Always centring conversations around the young athlete, not their parents
- Directing questions to the young athlete or speaking to them and involving them in the conversations rather than talking about them as though they are not there.
- Ensuring their safety and wellbeing comes first.

Transparency and boundaries.

Transparency is key – nothing is hidden, secret or a surprise. You can keep parents and families informed through good clear communication, regardless of how involved they are. Maintain good professional boundaries in your relationships with the parents or family members of young athletes – this sends an important message to the young athletes and the other people around the club or association. Clubs and associations, coaches, managers and team officials are responsible for the environment within which young athletes are playing basketball, and this may include addressing poor behaviour of parent and family members or escalating concerns via the Responding & Reporting Resource.

