

## Creating a child safe environment

- A child is a person under the age of 18 years of age. Brindabella Bushwalking Club has a legal Duty of Care to protect children from mental, physical or sexual abuse while they are engaged in club activities. This is not an onerous task. Bushwalking NSW has prepared practical [guidelines](#) (click to read them) to assist clubs create a culture of safety among their leaders and members, and we have adopted these. Leaders and parents/guardians/carers should check these from time to time as they could be revised or updated.
- The guidelines detail procedures which are to be carried out prior to accepting children on activities, and what to do if anyone suspects a child has suffered abuse during an activity, is in danger of abuse, or makes an allegation of abuse.
- The Walks Officer at the time will always be the Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) and must be informed of any incidents. The MPIO will not carry out any investigations concerning an alleged incident, but will ensure police have been contacted.
- Leaders should not feel compelled to accept children on an activity if they are uncomfortable or reluctant to do so, and parents/guardians/carers must always ask the leader's permission prior to bringing a child along to an activity. If the leader agrees, then the name of the Responsible Adult who will be accompanying the child must be provided.
- The relevant section on the Walk Report/Attendance Sheet must be completed by the nominated Responsible Adult before the walk. If there are likely to be a number of children then, as more space is available on it, the Family Walk Report should be used.
- Documentation concerning child protection, including all waiver forms, is kept indefinitely.