

## Safe Use of Changing Facilities Guide

### **Commitment to Te Tiriti O Waitangi**

New Zealand Lacrosse recognises Te Tiriti o Waitangi as Aotearoa New Zealand's founding document. New Zealand Lacrosse is committed to upholding the mana of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the principles of Partnership, Protection and Participation.

### **Background**

All children must be safe in changing facilities where they may be particularly vulnerable to bullying and abuse. Responsible adults will keep children safe and respect appropriate boundaries.

Thinking about how you can effectively meet the needs of all children and young people is important. It's important to consider the facilities that are available, who can access them and whether the environment is safe for children and young people.

We know that children and young people are particularly vulnerable in changing areas- this is due in part to various stages of dress/undress, and because they are often less supervised than at other times. There is a risk of child-to-child problems, such as bullying if the changing room is left unsupervised.

*The following procedures can help to reduce the risk of misconduct or abuse in changing facilities:*

1. Changing facilities should not be used by adults and children/young people at the same time. Where this is unavoidable, there must be access to separate changing, showering and toilet areas.
2. Under no circumstances should adults be undressed in front of children/young people in changing rooms.
3. Staff and volunteers must not change or shower at the same time as children using the same facilities.
4. For mixed-gender activities, separate facilities must be available for boys and girls.
5. If a child or young person feels uncomfortable changing or showering in public, then no pressure should be placed on them to do so.
6. If disabled children and young people need to use changing facilities, make sure they are accessible and that the disabled child or young person and their parent, caregiver or whānau are involved in deciding if and how they should be assisted. Make sure the child or young person is able to consent to the assistance that is offered.
7. The use of mobile phones and/or photographic equipment with video recording capabilities by staff and volunteers and also children and young people themselves should be prohibited under any circumstance in changing facilities.

8. Where no changing facilities are available, children/ young people and their parents, caregivers or whānau should be made aware of this prior to the activity taking place.

9. Parents, caregivers or whānau should be discouraged from entering changing facilities unless it is truly necessary. In such circumstances, only a parent of the same sex as the children/young people may enter the changing facility, and they should let the supervising adult know about this in advance. At least one member of staff/volunteer of the same sex as the children/ young people involved should be present with the parent, caregiver or whānau when other children/ young people are in the changing facility.

10. Staff and volunteers, especially those of the opposite sex, should not be in the changing facility when children are undressed

### **Encourage everyone to report concerning behaviour**

Create an environment where everyone feels safe and supported to voice their concerns. Clearly communicate:

- **Who** they can contact, assuring them their concerns will be listened to and taken seriously.
- **For children, young people, and adults at risk:** they should be encouraged to speak with a trusted adult if they ever feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

### **Definitions of words used in this policy**

**Bullying** is defined as repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person or a group of people that can have a significant impact on them. It may create a risk to their physical and/or mental health and safety. The person or people acting in this way may not intend to cause harm or may not see their behaviour as bullying.

**Child** is defined as a person under the age of 14.

**Staff** is defined as those who are employed directly by New Zealand Lacrosse, or volunteers, as well as staff and of partner organisations and contractors while they are working with children in the care and supervision of our organisation.

**Young person** is defined as a person of or over the age of 14 years, but under 18 years.

### Document History

Date	Author	Changes
October 2025	Alice Baucke	First Draft (Version 1.0)
November 2025	Alice Baucke	Board approved version released