



7 December 2023

[NationalSportPlan@health.gov.au](mailto:NationalSportPlan@health.gov.au)

Dear Secretariat

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the development of the National Sports Plan. This letter builds on earlier contributions of the National Women's Safety Alliance through the interview phase on 17 October 2023.

While the NWSA used the interview process to discuss, in depth, the early consultation draft of the National Sports Plan, this short-written submission reinforces our priorities regarding child and family safety.

We refer to the findings of the recently released survey of 1,945 Australian men which measured the prevalence of sex-based offending and risk behaviour among the respondents. The [Identifying and understanding child sexual offending behaviours and attitudes among Australian men](#) report delivered shocking findings, including:

- 1 in 6 respondents report sexual feelings towards children;
- 1 in 10 respondents report sexual offending against children;
- Of men who reported sexual contact with children, 70% also engaged in online offending.

Further, a strong minority (25%) of these men had regular access to children either through their work or as parents (39%).

We raised issues related to child safety in the early consultations, and specifically recommended that safety be captured as a guiding principle. We are reassured that this has been added to the November consultation paper. Again however, we urge that the proposed National Sports Plan align itself to the relevant objectives and system improvements highlighted in the *National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse*.

With this in mind, we also urge the National Sports Plan to consider broader issues of family safety and the propensity of perpetrators of family violence to use community sport institutions and opportunities to perpetrate violence against their family. A scenario where a protective parent has left a violent family dynamic only to have the perpetrator use their status or access to community sport to continue perpetrating has been brought to our attention, through our members, on several occasions.

In safeguarding children in their participation in sport and in delivering an inclusive and vibrant sports community in Australia, we call on the above considerations to be given due attention in the design of the National Sports Plan.