

Australian Wrestling Union Youth Sport Handbook

"The purpose of this Youth sport policy for the Australian Wrestling Union is to assist in the provision of quality sport experiences for young people. It will encourage the provision of safe, enjoyable and accountable environments for everyone involved in Youth wrestling."

Prepared by: Youth Sport Steering Committee

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AUSTRALIAN WRESTLING UNION

YOUTH SPORT POLICY

The AWU believes that young wrestlers have the following rights:

1. The right to participate in sport.
2. The right to qualified adult leadership.
3. The right to play as a child, not as an adult.
4. The right to participate at a level commensurate with each child's maturity and ability.
5. The right to participate in safe and healthy environments.
6. The right to proper preparation for participation in sport.
7. The right to share in the leadership and decision-making of their sports participation.
8. The right to an equal opportunity for success
9. The right to be treated with dignity
10. The right to have fun in sport





Introduction

The Australian Wrestling Union believes that young wrestlers are an important part of wrestling in Australia and a national approach to developing our youth is essential for the future growth of our sport.

Wrestling provides young people with a wide range of fitness and life skills and we should strive to make wrestling a positive sporting experience for everyone regardless of age, sex, ethnic origin or ability.

Achieving this goal will require a collaborative effort from all members of the wrestling community - young wrestlers, coaches, parents, officials and administrators at club, State and National Level.

The AWU Youth Sport Policy enables the wrestling community to meet the legal duty of care requirements as well as meeting the needs of our young athletes

For the purposes of this document the policy covers ages 5 – 17 years

Outline of Youth Sport Policy

There are many factors that contribute to making sport and wrestling an enjoyable positive experience for young people.

These include providing:

- *Fun experiences*
- *A safe and supportive environment*
- *A sense of belonging*
- *Skill development, challenge and the joy of achieving*
- *A clear pathway for improvement*
- *Equal opportunities for all young people*

The health and welfare of young wrestlers must be central to all of these objectives, and all members of the wrestling community must become familiar with and put into practice procedures which enable us to fulfil our duty of care to young athletes.

There is no single strategy that meets all of these requirements and the wrestling community must work together to achieve a workable solution that will benefit our young wrestlers.

Many issues facing young wrestlers are addressed in existing AWU policy documents, such as the Safer Clubs Program, AWU Anti-doping Policy, AWU Competition Guidelines and the AWU Member protection Policy. The AWU has also introduced three new initiatives - the AWU Youth Training Framework, the Grapplers Youth Sport Program and the National Youth Award scheme to assist the wrestling community to provide a wrestling experience which will encourage the long term involvement of young people in wrestling.

The AWU Youth Sport Handbook contains

- a) The AWU Youth Sport Policy
- b) The AWU National Youth Sport Initiatives:
 - the National Youth Sport Framework
 - the Grappler Wrestling Program
 - the National Youth Award program
- c) Implementation checklists
- d) Resource CD containing all AWU Policies and additional resource material to assist members to develop their own solution to achieve objectives.



AWU Youth Sport Policy

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1. Long Term Involvement

The main focus of the AWU Youth Sport Program is to provide a sports experience that will get young people involved in wrestling for a life-time. Getting young people active is important because it is an integral component of a healthy lifestyle. Wrestling assists in preventing lifestyle diseases and promotes physical, psychological and social well-being.

Quality experiences in school age and cadet wrestling provide the entry to a lifelong involvement in the sport for

- Enjoyment and recreation with pleasurable social involvement
- Fulfilling individual potential in sport.

An understanding of what young people look for in sport helps us provide positive experiences that encourage young people to remain active participants throughout their lives. More information on what young people are looking for in sport can be found in Topic 1 on the Resource CD

All of the other guidelines in the Youth Sport Policy relate to this topic and provide guidelines and strategies on how to keep young people involved in wrestling.

Wrestling will strive to cater for all levels of wrestlers by providing opportunities for every wrestler to develop to the best of their ability

The AWU will work collaboratively with State Wrestling Associations and clubs to improve young people's long term involvement in wrestling by:

- Ensuring a safe and secure environment for all young wrestlers by implementing the AWU policies and legislative requirements required to meet our duty of care obligations (see "2. Wrestling's legal obligations").
- Making wrestling open to all young people by making our sport more available and inclusive to all young people regardless of age, gender, ability and ethnic origin through our supportive club environment (see "3. Getting People involved").
- Providing clear pathway for the development of young wrestlers - via the Grapplers Wrestling Program and the National High Performance Pathway. These programs provide opportunities for young wrestlers from novice to elite athletes (see "4. Development Pathways for Young Wrestlers").
- Ensuring young people receive a high standard of instruction from quality coaches through our accredited Coaching programs and in-service development sessions for coaches (see "5. Quality Coaching").

- Protecting the health and welfare of young people by ensuring a safe wrestling environment and providing education in healthy sporting habits (see "6. Making Wrestling Safe").
- Enabling young people to become involved in wrestling in a variety of ways, and providing recognition for their achievements (see "7. People make it happen").
- Working together to build links with Government and other organisations to provide better delivery of our sport (see 8. Working together").

The AWU has introduced the following National Youth Sport Programs to assist clubs to provide a positive life-long experience for young wrestlers:

- The National Youth Sport Framework
- The Grapplers Program
- National Achievement Awards

More details on these programs are contained in this handbook

Suggested strategies to improving long term involvement at club level are:

- Provide equal opportunity for young people regardless of their ability by :
 - using appropriate and varied training methods
 - implementing the Grapplers program
 - Recognising of all levels of achievement either with club awards or by
 - Nominating young people for the National Achievement Awards
- Establish an appropriate club environment
The ideal club to promote long term involvement is a club that:
 - has family involvement and activities
 - Develops a club 'culture'
 - Promotes a healthy lifestyle
 - Encourages young people to become involved as administrators, coaches etc.
- Offering activities at times and locations that suit young people and their parents

How does your club rate?

Use the checklist at the back of this Handbook to work out how well your club performs in this area.

Topic 1 on the Resource CD contains more suggestions that can assist your club to attract young wrestlers for the long term

2. WRESTLING'S LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

ENSURING A SAFE AND
SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR
ALL
YOUTH SPORT
PARTICIPANTS

To protect the welfare of young people in wrestling, we must be aware of the relevant legal issues and put the necessary safeguards in place. By doing this we will be protecting both our young athletes and our organisation

The legislation relevant to the safety and welfare of participants covers

- discrimination
- child protection
- drugs
- health and safety
- privacy.

All of this legislation emphasises the serious obligations undertaken by any person or organisation taking responsibility for the care and/or coaching of children.

The community and the courts have a high expectation that officers of organisations and members of management committees are ware of their legal obligations and taking steps to ensure compliance.

The AWU has developed and implemented the Safer Clubs Program to provide all Member Associations and clubs with the standards, policies and guidelines to ensure safe wrestling for young people. All members of the wrestling community must implement these policies to ensure they meet their legal duty of care obligations

The AWU Safer Clubs Program provides all State Wrestling Associations and endorsed clubs with the information necessary to meet legislative requirements and sets out the AWU's policies on appropriate practices to ensure a safe wrestling environment for all members. Copies of the AWU policies and documents mentioned in this document are available on the AWU website and the CD contained in the Resource area.

2.1. Child Protection

All members associated with young wrestlers will comply with the requirements of the relevant Child Protection Act in their State or Territory.

More details on the requirements of the relevant legislation can be found in the AWU Member Protection Policy, www.ausport.gov.au/ethics/legischild.asp, from your State or Territory Government and on the resource cd

Currently the requirements are:

- ACT - none
- NSW - Working with Children Report
- QLD - Blue card
- SA - Under development (Child Protection "Keeping them Safe" Amendment Bill)
- VIC - Under development (see www.justice.vic.gov.au)
- WA - From 1 Jan 2006 a "Working with Children" Report

2.2 Discrimination

All AWU members and endorsed clubs will implement and actively promote the key objectives of the AWU Member Protection Policy.

This policy enables the AWU to provide a safe and harassment free environment for all members. It contains the AWU's policies on:

- Anti-discrimination
- Appropriate practices in respect of relationships between coaches/officials/volunteers and young people
meetings between coaches/officials/volunteers and young people
travelling practices with young people.
- The process for ensuring that all persons working with young people are screened
- The Codes of Behaviour for Wrestlers, Coaches Officials and Spectators
- The formal complaint system to make sure all cases are investigated extensively, confidentially and promptly; establish avenues for all parties (young people in particular) to discuss any concerns they have about somebody's behaviour, determine the actions to be taken by all parties where abuse is suspected

2.3 Health and Safety

All AWU members and endorsed clubs will implement and actively promote the key objectives of the:

- ***the AWU Safer Clubs Program***
This policy ensures the club environment is as safe as practical. It contains the AWU's policies on appropriate practices to ensure a safe wrestling environment such as availability of first aid equipment, club safety officers, and blood spill procedures.
- ***the AWU Risk Management Policy***
This policy identifies the potential hazards associated with wrestling and details the control measures that need to be in place to prevent or minimise the level of the risk.
- ***the AWU Competition Guidelines***
These guidelines contain the National guidelines for conducting safe competitions

2.4 Drugs in Sport

All AWU members and endorsed clubs will implement and actively promote the key objectives of the ***AWU Anti-Doping Policy***. This policy governs the use of drugs in sport and provides for the testing of competitors less than 18 years.

2.5 Privacy

All AWU members and endorsed clubs will implement and actively promote the key objectives of the ***AWU Privacy Policy***. This policy ensures that the AWU and its members meet the Privacy requirements.

Clubs in Action:

United Wrestling Club: Managing Risk

The United Wrestling Club provides training and hosts competitions for a wide range of wrestlers.

Risk management is an important component of the planning and delivery of the activities. To prevent bad experiences for the junior participants the club implements a number of strategies.

- Embraced the Safer Clubs Program and implemented its strategies
- Held a Club Safety meeting to gain the co-operation of all members
- Appointed a Club Safety/First Aid Officer
- Ensured first aid equipment is available at all sessions
- Notified all members of the strategies in place

Result

Since implementing the Risk Management Program the Club maintains an environment that:

- Where parents have confidence in bringing their children.
- All visitors are welcomed.
- Officials and members meet in a harmonious environment.
- All participants can train to meet their potential.

Further details on the National Policies mentioned in this section and the relevant strategies the AWU has in place can be found in the Safer Clubs Program folder available at all AWU endorsed clubs, the AWU website and the AWU Youth Sport Policy Resource CD

How does your club rate?

Use the checklist at the back of this Handbook to work out how well your club performs in this area

3. Getting Young People

MAKING SPORT OPEN
TO ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

Involved

Wrestling provides an opportunity to develop physical, social and emotional abilities and therefore should be accessible to all young people. A wide variety of skills and abilities developed in wrestling transfer to non-athletic careers and sport influences social factors such as community pride, identity, and leisure.

Marginalisation still occurs on the basis of disability, ethnicity, gender and sexuality, geographical location, indigenous background, social class and socio-economic status. A less obvious factor that shapes participation, but one of growing importance, is the way young people perceive their body image.

Recognising the difficulties from the perspective of young people, and the restrictions they have on being involved, allows sports to meet the challenge of all young people having the fundamental right to be involved in sport. Meeting legal obligations related to equity of opportunity must also be considered.

The AWU has the following strategies in place to ensure all young people have an opportunity to be involved in wrestling regardless of their ability, gender or ethnic background

3.1 Ability

- The Grapplers Program provides all young wrestlers with the opportunity to develop their wrestling skills and knowledge at their own speed in a non competitive environment and provides recognition for their achievements

3.2 Body Shape

- As a sport, wrestling caters for many different body shapes and weights, allowing children of similar weights and ages to train and compete fairly.
- Children should not be pressured to reduce or gain weight rapidly in order to "make weight" for competition.
- Local and State competitions should have a suitable allowance for weight divisions for school age and cadet divisions.
- The Grapplers program provides education in healthy eating and weight management.

3.3 Disability

- Wherever possible young people with disabilities will be encouraged to participate in wrestling, however the safety of the young athlete and other athletes on the mat must take priority. The AWU will work with clubs, coaches and the individual athlete to provide an appropriate wrestling experience

- Many people with disabilities are able to participate fully in wrestling competition with little or no modifications to the wrestling rules. Whenever modification to rules is necessary to allow a wrestler to compete, referees and officials will work with the athlete to help them to compete. The safety of the young wrestler and other athletes on the mat will be taken into account and must be the prime factor when developing strategies.

3.4 Ethnicity

- Wrestling appeals to young wrestlers from a wide range of different cultural backgrounds, and for many wrestlers it provides an opportunity to be involved in a sport that has a high profile within their culture.
- The AWU welcomes young wrestlers from all cultural backgrounds and will not discriminate based on ethnicity.
- Wherever possible, coaches, referees and officials will work with young wrestlers to ensure there is minimal impact on cultural and religious beliefs and practices. However, the safety of the young athlete and other athletes on the mat must be the prime consideration when making adjustments

3.5 Gender and Sexuality

- Traditionally wrestling is a male dominated sport. Less than 1% of its members are female. However with the inclusion of women into the Olympics, more females are becoming interested in wrestling.
- Until the number of female wrestlers increase, female wrestlers will train in mixed sex clubs. Coaches and clubs should ensure there are separate change rooms, toilets etc for women.
- During competition female weigh-in will be conducted separately to male weigh-in, and every effort will be made to ensure privacy for the competitors
- The AWU is currently exploring strategies to develop women's wrestling. All National and State level competitions provide opportunities for women to compete and they are eligible for selection to the same elite development programs as their male counterparts. The Grappler program has no gender bias.

3.6 Equity of Opportunity

- The AWU will not discriminate against young people because of their ability, body shape, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, geographical location, club, race or socio-economic status when making decisions about
 - who is selected to play or compete
 - who is provided with the best facilities and times for training and competing
 - who becomes a selector, coach, official or sport administrator
 - how opportunities are made available
- The AWU will publish fair selection policies for all major events.

Clubs in Action:

Wrestling at the 2005 Melbourne Deaflympic Games

The 2005 Melbourne Deaflympic Games was an international multi sport competition for hearing impaired athletes. Over 110 wrestlers from 20 countries attended. It was hosted by the AWU and the Victorian Wrestling Association. Members from Victorian Wrestling clubs and interstate clubs worked to ensure a high quality tournament.

The aims of the wrestling competition was to

- Provide an international level competition for hearing impaired wrestlers utilising the FILA regulations

The following modifications to competition rules were made:

Pre-games training

- Awareness sessions for referees and officials
- Scoreboards/timers visible from the mat
- A visual system for alerting athletes to upcoming bouts
- Referee whistles with a higher pitch were purchased
- Arranged for sign language translators to be present

During the games.

- Referees ensured hand signals during the match were visible to all competitors
- Touch and hand signals, rather than the whistle was used to stop play

These minor modifications enabled the competition to provide a quality high level wrestling experience for the competitors. Most of the strategies used could be easily implemented at Club or State level

Further reading on this topic can be found in Topic 3 of the Resource CD. This includes suggested strategies for State Associations and clubs to implement to ensure they are able to include all young people in wrestling.

How does your club rate?

Use the checklist at the back of this Handbook to work out how well your club performs in this area

4. DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS FOR YOUNG WRESTLERS

MOVING PROGRESSIVELY
THROUGH JUNIOR SPORT

Years 5 to 17 are a time of tremendous development for young people on all levels - physically, psychologically, emotionally and socially. Planning for the progressive development of wrestling skills in young people requires consideration of

- Identifiable stages of development
- Different levels of ability
- Different rates in gaining wrestling skills
- Different interests of young people in the sport.

It is the responsibility of all wrestling coaches and leaders to manage the experiences available to young people so that activities and challenges are offered in a planned and sequential manner.

Physical activity is essential for the normal growth and development of the child. However, there are potentially harmful effects for young wrestlers through the impact of intense training. This can adversely affect the dynamics and timing of growth and physical maturation. Determining when children are ready for more intense training and competition is a duty of care required of wrestling coaches.

Further reading and information on the different stages of growth and maturation can be found in Topic 4 A on the Resource CD

The AWU's Youth Sport Framework and the Grappler program are designed to take these factors into account. Further reading and information on the rationale behind the Framework and Grappler program can be found in Topic 4B on the Resource CD

As young athletes mature and grow, they are provided with opportunities for talent development through the AWU High Performance Pathways.

The National Youth Sport Program provides guidelines to assist coaches to provide a wrestling program that is suitable to the individual development of the young wrestler and recognition for their achievements.

4.1 Accommodating Physical Growth and Maturation - Training

During training and practise it is the coach's responsibility to ensure their program takes into account the individual maturity and growth of wrestlers and does not place unrealistic demands on young children. The AWU has two programs to assist coaches in developing their program:

- The AWU Youth Sport Framework provides coaches with guidelines to ensure training schedules are based on individual growth and maturation (Table 1)
- The Grappler program provides a structured program for developing wrestlers as well as an avenue for education on issues related to growth and maturation, healthy nutrition and other sports health areas

4.2 Accommodating Physical Growth and Maturation – Competition

Competition provides athletes with the challenge of applying, testing and developing skills learnt in training. Every effort should be made to ensure the competition experience is a positive one. Through competition, young people make friends and experience loyalty, co-operation and learning through managing success and mistakes, and coping with disappointments.

Competitive experiences should be planned to reflect the level of physical, social and emotional development of the participants and provide a progressive bridge to adult competition.

- The AWU Competition Guidelines together with the AWU Youth Framework provide tournament managers with guidelines to be used when planning tournaments for school age and cadet wrestlers.
- When arranging special matches for young wrestlers, the weight, age and skill level of wrestlers must be taken into account to avoid the risk of injury and psychological distress.
- When dealing with very young athletes emphasis should be placed on participation rather than winning.
- The AWU has limited the use of Suplex moves to advanced wrestlers 16 yrs and above. (see the AWU Policy on the use of Suplex)

4.3 Talent Development

Elite athletes do not necessarily show their talent from an early age. For this reason young athletes (under 12 years old) should be encouraged to participate in a wide variety of motor skills before being focused to a single sport or style. This approach will assist young athletes (especially late developers) to stay in wrestling long enough to derive benefit and satisfaction.

- The Grapplers program provides recognition and challenges for younger advanced wrestlers
- Wrestlers between 14-17 yrs are eligible for selection to the AWU National Junior Development Program. The National Junior Development Program provides talented young athletes with the opportunity to develop skills and tactics through a series of National training camps and competitions. More details on the National Junior Development squad is available through the AWU National Office.
- The National High Performance Pathway provides a clear pathway for young wrestlers wishing to progress to high level international competition (table 2)
- State Wrestling Associations are encouraged to develop additional talent development opportunities at a State Level

Clubs in Action

Grapplers Program

The Grapplers Wrestling Program

Grapplers provides structured wrestling program for young wrestlers. It provides children with

- ⇒ A graduated approach to learning wrestling skills, tactics and a healthy approach to sport
- ⇒ Recognition for their achievements at each stage of the program

The goal is to have the program running in all States and increase the number of young wrestlers in the sport

Outline

Clubs sign onto the Grapplers Program and receive assistance from the AWU to become a "Safer Club"

The club's qualified coaches will teach basic skills as set out in the Junior Sport Framework. Children will be issued with a "wrestling passport" appropriate to their level. As they master each skill, the coach signs it off in their passport.

When the young wrestler has completed that level of the program, their passport is sent to the National Office and they will receive recognition for their achievement and the passport for the next level. The program included wrestling skills, tactics and education in areas such as anti doping, nutrition, FILA rules etc.

Aims of the program are to

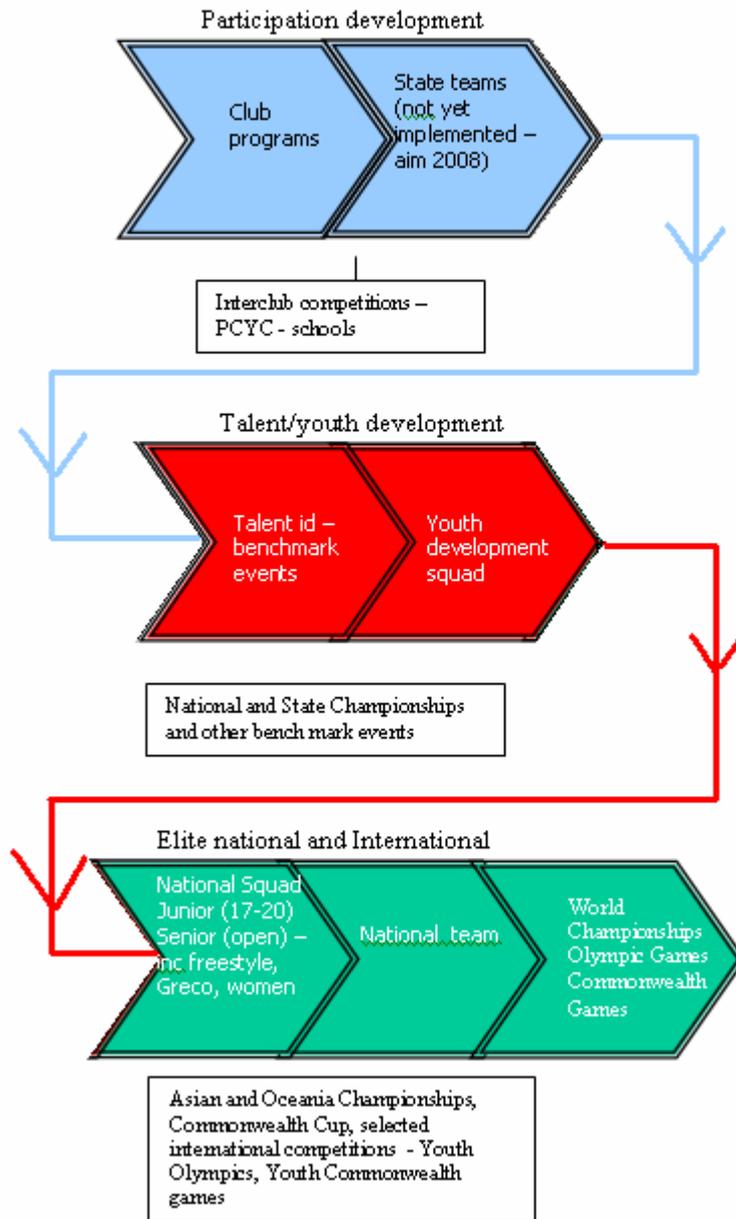
- ⇒ help children develop new skills in a professional environment
- ⇒ provide children with recognition for their achievements
- ⇒ build confidence in children so they will participate in competitions

Further reading on this topic can be found in Topic 4A and 4B of the Resource C, and the National Youth Sport Framework and Grapplers Wrestling Program sections of this handbook.

How does your club rate?

Use the checklist at the back of this Handbook to work out how well your club performs in this area

Table 2 - AWU High Performance Pathway



5. QUALITY COACHING

Coaching of junior wrestlers is an exciting way to be involved in sports, but it is not easy. It is not uncommon for coaches to be overwhelmed by the responsibilities involved in helping athletes through their early sport experiences.

Coaching of young wrestlers requires more than telling them to lace up their shoes and step on the mat. It involves preparing them physically and mentally to compete effectively, fairly and safely in their sport, while providing them with a positive role model.

It is important to recognize that young wrestlers have different perspectives, experience different emotions, and set different goals than older people do. They present special challenges to a coach because they react differently than adults to instructions, criticism, encouragement, failure and success.

Understanding the learning process and the developmental stages in this process are necessary for quality junior sport experiences. Young people have preferences for how they like to learn, and their preferences might change depending on the type of task and their prior experiences.

Some might like to watch, listen and experiment, and others may like to try an activity first and refine their learning through feedback.

Young people typically learn more than one thing at a time. In the process of learning physical skills, young people also learn what behavior is expected, how to work with others, and what they are good at.

Recognizing that learning is multi-dimensional is important. It highlights the complexity of acquiring skills and how broader social aspects of life impact on young people as they learn physical skills.

People in leadership roles should plan for each session and the season ahead. Planning should address not only what is presented but how it will be presented to optimize learning, safety and enjoyment.

The AWU will provide quality coaching education to assist coaches to provide fun, dynamic and challenging training for young wrestlers

7.1 Planning

The AWU Grapplers program assists coaches to develop training sessions that are fun and cater for the participant's developmental stage. The program provides an emphasis on developing the skills and knowledge needed in a structured manner.

The AWU Code of Practise for clubs provides clear guidelines for training etiquette and standards of behaviour at training. The Code of Practise can be found in the Safer Clubs Program folder

7.2 Coaching Sports Skills and Behaviours

The AWU is part of the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme and conducts regular courses to provide education and training to wrestling coaches.

These courses are regularly revised to ensure they reflect best training practises and include a module on coaching young athletes.

Coaches undertaking upgrading or reaccreditation activities can use this module for self-development.

Coaches involved in the Grapplers program will receive additional training to assist them to make their wrestling sessions dynamic and challenging.

Suggested strategies improving the quality of wrestling coaching are:

- Have a management plan for training sessions include the use of space, time, safety, equipment and facilities
- Make sessions more challenging by making them more dynamic. Incorporate wrestling games into training sessions to provide variety.
- Encourage young wrestlers to develop good sporting behaviours .

How does your club rate?

Use the checklist at the back of this Handbook to work out how well your club performs in this area.

Topic 5 on the Resource CD contains more suggestions that can assist your club to improve the quality of coaching.

6. MAKING WRESTLING SAFE

PROTECTING THE HEALTH
AND WELFARE OF YOUNG
PEOPLE THROUGH A SAFE
SPORTS EXPERIENCE

We have a legal duty of care to not expose young people to risk in any aspect of providing the sports experience. The AWU Safer Clubs program addresses many issues to ensure we make our sport safe. Areas of concern for which advice, training and procedures should be in place include

- facilities and equipment
- the environment
- training and competition
- infectious diseases
- medical conditions
- drugs
- weight control
- dealing with emergencies

The AWU Safer Clubs Program and the Competition Guidelines have been developed to ensure we provide a safe wrestling environment for our young athletes.

6.1 Facilities and Equipment

The Australian Wrestling Union recognizes the need to provide a high quality sporting and spectator environment. Through the AWU Safer Clubs Program the following safety practices are in place.

- First aid kit is well stocked and available at all trainings and competitions
- Change areas are clean, hygienic and well maintained.
- Floor wipes and mops are available
- The wrestling mats are in a well lit area with adequate space around them. Where this is not possible the walls, tables etc must be padded.
- The wrestling mats will be kept free from tears and other defects
- Prior to all wrestling (training and competition) all equipment is inspected to ensure it is as safe as possible
- Each AWU endorsed club conducts an annual review of the sport safety practises and updates this plan as necessary, prior to the start of the wrestling season.
- The use of appropriate protective equipment is highly recommended. This includes, long sleeves/pants to prevent mat burn, knee and ear protectors. The ear protectors must be of an approved standard with no hard or metal shell
- Long hair must be tied back and fingernails kept short
- No hard metal objects ie jewellery, hair ties or under wire bras are to be worn whilst wrestling
- Suitable clothing and footwear must be worn for training.

- Wrestlers are advised to replace fluids before, during and after activities. Water should be available at training and competition venues

6.2 Training and Competition

Through the AWU Grapplers Program the AWU will work with coaches to provide a quality program with safe training methods and a focus on fun and enjoyment. Through the Grapplers program, the AWU is able to implement the recommendations of the Youth Sport Framework and sets guidelines for appropriate workloads. The Grapplers program also provides education on safe training practises for athletes and parents,

6.3 Infectious Diseases

- All AWU endorsed clubs and events will observe the Sports Medicine Australia blood and infectious disease policy.
- Equipment to clean up blood spills should be available close to the mat at all times
- Athletes should not share personal items ie drink bottles and towels
- Wrestlers who are ill, feverish or recovering from illness should not participate until recovered
- Athletes with fungal or skin infections should not participate until recovered.

6.4 Medical Conditions

- All AWU accredited coaches are required to have completed a first aid course and are encouraged to maintain first aid accreditation.
- Athletes are required to complete a pre-involvement questionnaire providing information on medical conditions and specific needs. *A copy of the questionnaire is provided in the Safer Clubs Program and on the Resource CD*

6.5 Drugs and alcohol

- Alcohol, tobacco and other social drugs **are not permitted** at Youth Wrestling events
- The Grapplers Wrestling program provides education to young wrestlers and their parents on the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol on health and sports performance.

6.6 Weight Control

Weight control is an integral part of wrestling. Many young wrestlers may be tempted to resort to quick methods of weight reduction relying on dehydration, fasting or bulimia to make a weight division for competition. The AWU recognises these practises as extremely dangerous and has the following strategies in place to address the issue.

- The Grapplers wrestling program provides young athletes, coaches and parents with education on safe ways to "make weight"
- The Grapplers wrestling program provides young athletes, coaches and parents with education on healthy nutrition in sport
- The use of diuretics and laxatives to reduce weight for young wrestlers is not permitted.

- The Grapplers program will provide training to coaches to help them recognise signs of a weight management problem and strategies to assist these athletes.
- Local and State level competitions should have a weight allowance to assist athletes to make weight safely.

6.7 Dealing with Emergencies

- The AWU Safer Clubs program provides written procedures for dealing with medical emergencies, including incident report procedures. Clubs should use these guidelines to develop their own incident management plan.
- All Club Safety Co-ordinators and Coaches are encouraged to maintain their first aid qualifications and should seek medical opinion when
 - the health of a participant is questionable
 - recovery from illness/injury is uncertain
 - a participant is injured during training/competition.

When medical advice cannot be obtained, the young person will not be permitted to participate.

- A first aid kit must be available at training and competition venues.
- Clubs should maintain details on how to contact parents/carers of young people .

Suggested strategies to make wrestling safe at club level are:

- Appoint a Club Safety Co-ordinator and implement the Safer Clubs Program in your club
- Know your wrestlers - conduct a pre-season health questionnaire and maintain contact records for parents/carers at each training session
- Discourage the use of alcohol, tobacco and other social drugs at all club activities
- Use the Grapplers program to provide health education to your young wrestlers and their parents and encourage them to adopt a healthy lifestyle

How does your club rate?

Use the checklist at the back of this Handbook to work out how well your club performs in this area.

Topic 6 on the Resource CD contains more suggestions that can assist your club to make wrestling a safer sport.

7. People making it Happen

Participants in Youth sport potentially come into contact with, and are influenced by, a diverse range of people including :

- young people
- parents and carers
- teachers
- coaches
- officials (referees, etc)
- administrators
- volunteers.

These people are important to wrestling because they provide the necessary infrastructure for its delivery. They also determine the social atmosphere of sport.

The importance of their contribution cannot be underestimated because of the close relationship between the quality of leadership found in sport and the quality of the sport experience for young people.

It is important to facilitate an interaction between the parties identified above to ensure that being engaged in wrestling is a good experience.

The likely outcomes of improved interactions are:

- retention of young people in the sport either as wrestlers or as any of the other parties
- attraction of greater numbers of people to the sport, especially young people.

All members of the wrestling community, coaches, athletes, parents and officials play a vital role in the growth and development of wrestling for young people.

7.1 Young People

- The AWU encourages all athletes to
 - follow the advice in the *Code of Behaviour* and *Play by the Rules* (see Resources)
 - Respect the rights and worth of all participants whatever their gender, ability, cultural background etc
 - Always play fair and acknowledge others' good play.
 - Do not provoke or use physical or verbal abuse against anyone
- Through the Grapplers program, and on the website the AWU will provide young people with the *Players Code of Behaviour*

- The AWU will work with young wrestlers to ensure they have input into issues affecting their sporting experience.
- The AWU will respond to breaches of the Players Code of Behaviour in accordance with the AWU Member Protection Policy

7.2 Parents and Carers

- The AWU encourages all parents to:
 - Follow the advice in the *Code of Behaviour*.
 - Take an active role by contributing to your child's sports participation.
 - Look for opportunities to promote fairness, safety and respect for all (coaches, officials, team mates and other teams).
 - Focus on your children's and team's efforts rather than winning or losing.
 - Make it clear that the interests of your children are more important than winning.
 - Recognise that young people play sport for fun, friendship and personal achievement.
 - The AWU will promote the Parents Code of Behaviour on its website and through the Grapplers Program

7.3 Coaches

Communication

- The AWU will promote the Coaches Code of Behaviour on its website and through the AWU Coaching program.
- The AWU coaching course educates coaches about their roles and responsibilities as a coach

Setting an example

The AWU expects all accredited coaches set a positive example to young athletes by:

- Displaying control and respect for all involved (opponents, other coaches, referees, administrators, parents and spectators).
- Developing team respect for the ability of all participants including opponents as well as for the judgment of officials and opposing coaches.
- Working with others, especially officials, to show young people how they should behave.
- Speaking to all participants using inclusive and respectful language.
- Being a positive role model with regard to lifestyle factors

7.4 Officials

- The AWU will promote the Code of Behaviour for Officials on its website and through any training programs for officials.
- The AWU Competition Guidelines sets out the roles and responsibilities of officials during competition.
- The AWU encourages all officials to:

- Regulate the conduct of competition and explain rules to help participants understand how the rules apply to competition situations.
 - Caution participants before incurring an infraction in an effort to change their behaviour.
 - Acknowledge participants when they demonstrate good behaviour.
 - Be fair, consistent, and positive in your interactions with everyone.
 - Control negative reaction and comments from spectators.
 - Set a good example through your actions and words.
- The AWU will assist officials to keep up to date with the latest trends and safety practices through newsletters and the website.

7.5 Administrators

Management

- Copies of the Code of Conduct are available to the wrestling community on the AWU website, and through the Safer Clubs and Grappler programs. The Codes of Conduct form part of the AWU Member Protection Policy and the Risk Management Policy
- The Safer Clubs Program provides all AWU endorsed clubs with copies of AWU Policies.
- The AWU will monitor the implementation of these programs.
- The AWU encourages all State Associations and clubs to implement the strategies contained in Topic 7 of the Resource cd
- The AWU will recognise the contributions of participants and volunteers in the newsletter or at competitions and functions

Working with Volunteers

- At a national level The AWU will develop and provide resources for volunteers to extend their skills
- The AWU will adopt a mentoring system where experienced persons assist others in organisation, administration, refereeing, coaching etc.
- Without compromising safety and other issues, the AWU will enable involvement of young people in particular in coaching and officiating roles.

Training Personnel

- The AWU provide personnel with opportunities to increase their skills through training, accreditation and updating
- The AWU will maintain records of attendance and completion of National training courses
- The AWU will endeavour to make training affordable and provide flexible delivery

Leadership Succession

- The AWU will adopt a mentoring system where experienced leaders assist others.
- The AWU will provide opportunities for leaders to extend their skills
- Through the Annual National Excellence awards and the National Hall of Fame, the AWU will recognise the work of leaders.
- Working collaboratively with State Wrestling Associations and clubs, the AWU will provide opportunities for young people to gain experience in organisation,

administration, umpiring, coaching etc and provide incentives for involvement in leadership roles (eg letters for CV from club president).

State Wrestling Associations, Clubs and all members of the wrestling community are encouraged to read Topic 7 in the Resource CD and implement suitable strategies to provide a positive sports experience for young people.

How does your club rate?

Use the checklist at the back of this Handbook to work out how well your club performs in this area.

Topic 7 on the Resource CD contains more suggestions that can assist your club to work with people to provide a positive sporting experience.

8. WORKING TOGETHER

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION
FOR BETTER DELIVERY OF
JUNIOR SPORT

Consultation and co-operation are essential for effective and efficient junior sport participation.

The Australian Wrestling Union, the State and Territory Wrestling Associations and Clubs must work with each other and with other organisations to ensure the successful delivery of junior sport.

The cooperation and goodwill of these organisations is vital to the successful delivery of junior sport. Consultation and cooperation provide many benefits including

- identifying gaps and overlaps in delivery and resolving cooperative approaches to them
- consistency in the provision of junior sport with regard to age groupings, competition rules etc
- sharing sports resources.

The AWU will work closely with State Wrestling Associations, clubs and major stakeholders to provide young people with a positive wrestling experience

8.1 Avoiding Gaps and Overlaps

- The AWU will hold regular meetings with State Wrestling Associations to assess the needs of young people in the area and how to most efficiently meet these.
- The AWU will work with young wrestlers to ensure they have input into issues affecting their sporting experience.
- Through the Annual National Excellence awards the AWU will provide recognition for groups that have established strong community links and benefited junior sport on a National level.
- The AWU will encourage State Wrestling Associations to establish similar strategies at State/Club level

8.2 Achieving Consistency

- All National Championships will be conducted in accordance with the FILA regulations for School-age and Cadet Wrestlers. This will ensure consistency in the age and weight divisions and wrestling rules.

8.3 Sharing Resources

- The AWU will work with State Wrestling Associations to identify ways to share resources to benefit all young wrestlers. ie the exchange of services between all members (eg coaching, refereeing, professional development for coaches).
- The AWU will provide recognition for individuals and groups who share their resources.

8.4 Building Links

- To share resources and promote opportunities for our young wrestlers the AWU will work at a national level to establish links with Government and non-government organisations, other International Wrestling Associations and other Sporting Organisations

State Wrestling Associations, Clubs and all members of the wrestling community are encouraged to read Topic 8 in the Resource CD and implement suitable strategies to build links within their own communities.

How does your club rate?

Use the checklist at the back of this Handbook to work out how well your club performs in this area.

Topic 8 on the Resource CD contains more suggestions that can assist your club to build strong community links.

AWU Youth Sport Framework

MOVING
PROGRESSIVELY
THROUGH JUNIOR SPORT

The National Youth Framework and Grapplers program was designed to assist young people to move progressively through sport by providing opportunities to

- gain skills in line with their level of maturation
- move easily from one stage of involvement to another
- be motivated and have fun while developing their skills and interests
- inspire them to stay involved long term.

Stages in Sport Progression

There are definite stages in taking young people from their early involvement to being an experienced participant.

Generally, the progression moves through the following stages

- ***broad experiences*** when young people master basic sports skills in many sporting activities with fun the focus
- ***progression*** when a greater focus is placed on skill development, but fun and enjoyment are still important
- ***specialisation*** when some young people become serious about sport and are keen to refine their skills
- ***recreational participation*** when sport is played for fun and to maintain skills.

Life-long involvement is the end goal for all, with adults participating in recreational, elite, masters' or veterans' activities according to their talent and interests.

Aim of AWU National Youth Sport Framework

The aim of the Youth Sport Framework is to provide pathways planning for young people to sequentially develop their sports skills to equip them to

- reach their potential in sports of their choice
- continue in and enjoy adult sport.

The planned developmental levels accommodate individual differences, because participants

- differ in their ability to gain sports skills
- move through the various development stages at different rates
- have different levels of skill requirements and challenge.

The AWU National Youth Sport Framework and the Grapplers wrestling program provide a clear pathway for young wrestlers, providing guidelines for coaches on session frequency and duration, and contents to help them adapt their training regimes to cater for their needs.

Further details on the rationale behind the development of the AWU Youth Sport Framework can be found on the Resource CD – Topic 4B Wrestling Pathways