

CHILD PROTECTION



- Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member. However, remember that same gender abuse can also occur.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Secure parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Request written parental consent if club officials are required to transport young people in their cars.

Coaches should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Fail to act upon and record any allegations made by a child.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

Code of Conduct for Coaches

Many sports have developed codes of conduct for child protection based on the principle that sports organisations have a duty of care to safeguard children. A code of conduct consists of the following.....

- Respect the dignity and spirit of all athletes, including children and young adults.
- Treat all athletes fairly.
- Establish supportive, positive environments to encourage healthy competition, skill development, fun and achievement.
- Avoid contact or conduct that may be interpreted as having sexual connotations or which your sport defines as inappropriate.
- Do not take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises an athlete or that negatively affects

their self esteem.

- Do not tolerate acts of aggression.
- Work towards eliminating harassment and abuse from sports environments.
- Be prepared to intervene if a child or young person under 18 is being abused or neglected.
- Practice fair play both during and outside of all sports activities. 'Fair play' is defined as showing considerate regard for athletes, staff, parents, spectators and officials; abiding by the rules of the sport; abiding by the officials' decisions.
- Adhere to the policies of your sports organisation.

Appropriate Child Protection training can help to raise awareness of abuse, and its' prevention.

USEFUL CONTACTS

Conwy County Borough Council Leisure & Community Development Services

The department has regular contact with coaches/volunteers and a need to inform them of the authority's stance on child protection and the procedures for reporting concerns.

Sports Development Officers have the opportunity to organise child protection courses e.g. Safeguarding & Protecting Children

Conwy County Borough Council Leisure & Community Development Services, Tel 01492 575563/64
www.conwy.gov.uk/leisure

Social Services Department

94 Conwy Road, Colwyn Bay LL29 7LR, Tel 01492 575600
Argyle Road, Llandudno LL30 1DF, Tel 01492 871444

NSPCC Freephone Helpline, Tel 0800 800500 (24 hours)

North Wales Police, Tel 01492 517171

Criminal Record Bureau, Tel 0870 9090 811

Child Protection in Sport Unit, Tel 0116 234 0464
www.thecpsu.org.uk

This leaflet has been produced
by Sport Conwy, your local
Sports Council.

For further information contact the Secretary
on 01492 575564/63.

This leaflet is for general guidance only. Anyone with specific concerns should seek guidance from an appropriate organisation, some of whom are detailed on the back page.

Sport Conwy Guidelines

Voluntary organisations provide many sport, play and leisure activities for children. Such organisations should accept that prevention of abuse is part of their duty of care for the children for which they provide. The prevention of abuse whilst in the provider's care is the primary concern of this leaflet. But it may also be helpful in dealing with abuse occurring outside such an environment. The following procedures and codes of practice are intended to prevent the abuse of children whilst in the care of providers. All staff, coaches, volunteers and others working with children should be familiar with and observe them at all times. Unfortunately, children cannot be protected in every situation, but by publicising these procedures the secrecy that often accompanies abuse may be reduced and this will hopefully deter potential abusers and make it easier for victims to speak out.

It is not the responsibility of coaches or members of the public to decide whether abuse has taken place, but they do have a moral obligation to report suspicions to the relevant authorities, who have a statutory duty to investigate. Everyone involved in provision for children should be aware that:

- Child abuse can and does occur.
- Children are usually abused by persons that they know and trust.
- Abusers often avoid situations where checks on their background are likely, so a club which asks questions will deter them.
- There are several organisations which deal with child abuse and therefore coaches are not expected to shoulder the responsibility alone.
- The consequences of raising a concern that, after enquiry proves to be false, are preferable to saying nothing.

What is Child Abuse?

There are 4 main types of Child Abuse, these can be defined as follows.....

Neglect

.....the persistent or severe neglect of a child, or exposure to any kind of danger resulting in likely or significant impairment of the child's health or development.

Emotional Abuse

.....likely or actual severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

Physical Abuse

....likely or actual injury to a child or exposure to physical injury (or suffering) to a child.

Sexual Abuse

.....likely or actual exploitation of a child or adolescent, including pornography.

Recognising the Signs

The following table describes some of the signs which may indicate that abuse has occurred. These do not always indicate child abuse, but the possibility should be considered. If in doubt, share your concern without delay.

	Physical Signs	Behavioural Signs
Physical Neglect, Emotional Abuse	Neglected appearance, Unattended health/medical needs. Failure to thrive or gain weight.	Delayed development. Self destructive behaviour. Desperate attention seeker. Stealing food.
Physical Abuse	Frequent trauma, such as fractures, grazes, cuts, injuries or different ages, burns, bruises to various parts of the body.	Hyper critical parents. Child reluctant to go home. Wary of physical contact. Behavioural extremes-withdrawn, wary, aggressive, disruptive.
Sexual Abuse	Sleep/eating disturbances. Physical problems e.g. pain, itching, urinary infection. Sexual knowledge or curiosity beyond years.	Fear of particular individuals. Aggressive or unusually compliant behaviour. Depressed, withdrawn, sad, listless, self injury, guilt, anger.

Responding to Allegations

If a child says, or indicates that they are being abused, the persons receiving the information should:

- React calmly, so as not to alarm the child.
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Tell the child they are not to blame and that it was right to tell.
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in light of subsequent developments.
- Explain the duty to pass the information to the relevant organisations to help stop the abuse.
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Make a full written record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible.
- If the child's life is in immediate danger, or there is a real risk of significant harm if there is further delay, emergency medical attention should be sought.

GOOD PRACTICE

Many people may have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is recommended that providers seek to take all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. The same procedure should be applied whether coaches are paid, unpaid, part time or full time.

All Governing Bodies of Sport within Wales have a Child Protection Policy approved by the NSPCC. A number of sports have also appointed Child Protection Officers within clubs.

The following are examples of good practice, protecting both the child and the provider from false allegations of abuse....

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treat all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with players
- Make sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensure that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines provided by the Coach Education Programme. Young people and their parents should always be consulted and their agreement gained.
- Involve parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, teachers, coaches or officials work in pairs.