

CHILD PROTECTION - GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

1 - Safety

Always ensure the safety of any children for whom you are responsible as far as possible.

Ensure that you have taken all reasonable steps to establish a safe working environment. The work done and the manner in which it is done should be in keeping with regular and approved practice. If situations haven't been covered in coaching courses please use common sense.

Where any activity or event is taking place, ensure, as far as possible the location is secure from access by unauthorised third parties. Be vigilant for people who do not appear to be relatives or friends of children who are participating, but nevertheless, seem to spend a substantial amount of time videoing or photographing them.

Ensure that any activity being undertaken should be suitable for the age, experience and ability of the children.

Ensure where it is necessary or appropriate that parents have been kept informed of the activity undertaken and that parents and the child have given their consent and that the child is made aware of his / her personal responsibilities in terms of his / her safety.

2 - General Supervision

It is important to always encourage openness, integrity, transparency and honesty in all activities involving children.

Where changing or dressing rooms are used, you must not be present whilst children are showering or changing unless accompanied by another responsible adult, and only then in exceptional circumstances.

You must try to ensure that male and female responsible adults always accompany mixed children's teams.

Never allow any physically rough or sexually provocative games, or inappropriate talking or touching by anyone, in any group for which you have responsibility.

3 - Confidentiality

Where there is a relationship between you and a child, you must realise that you may be in a position of confidence and you may gather information about the child.

You should never:

- Encourage confidences beyond what is appropriate
- Intrude into the private life of that child.

If it seems that, because of a child's youth or inexperience the child is not able to judge what information it is appropriate to confide, try and make the child aware of the importance and implications of the information he / she is imparting or is proposing to impart.

Where possible reach an agreement with the child as to what is regarded as confidential information.

Finally, remember that often it will be necessary to divulge confidential information to a responsible third party. Remember that confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of information to persons who have a right to know or where there is a legal duty to disclose facts, in circumstances where what is involved is:

- The pursuit of disciplinary or legal action or the enforcement of any applicable laws or any rules or regulations of the EVA or the relevant Governing Body.
- The evaluation of the child's performance in their sport.

4 - Integrity

Always remember that a child may not have the same awareness of the importance or implications of what is being said as an adult or of what is acceptable to say about others.

Discourage children from talking offensively about others except where the child seems to be hinting at or talking about an instance of abuse or irregularity.

Encourage children to obey the spirit of the rules and regulations of volleyball and compete in good faith and treat their opponents and officials with respect.

Emphasise the spirit of fair play in volleyball and the ideals embodied in the EVA.

Never advocate measures, which could be deemed to constitute seeking to gain an unfair advantage or cheating of any kind.

5 - Physical Contact

Physical contact should be kept to a minimum and used only when strictly necessary.

No player should be made to feel uncomfortable, particularly with any physical handling in coaching.

Physical contact should be generally for one or more of the following purposes and should be carried out by the individual (s) set out below:

- to develop or demonstrate sport skills / techniques by a suitably and appropriately trained and qualified coach, official or team manager.
- to treat an injury by a suitably and appropriately trained and qualified medical practitioner
- to give sport massage. Sport massages should only be given where necessary for physiotherapeutic, medical or physiological purposes and should only be performed by trained personnel.
- for any other purpose involving the treatment, diagnosis or examination of the child by a suitably and appropriately trained and qualified individual.

Physical contact may be appropriate in other circumstances, such as consoling a child who is upset, or administering first aid but always ensure that it is necessary and reasonable and takes place in a culture of openness.

Remember that interpretations of touching will be influenced by cultural differences, religious implications and by the age, sex, sexual orientation and physical status of you and the child.

If a child is vulnerable due to their physical state or learning or communication difficulties or requires special help, take particular care when proposing to use any kind of physical contact. If possible, try to obtain the views of the child and their parent / guardian beforehand.

6 - Positions of Trust

Always remember that, whenever you are responsible for the care or supervision of a child, or where you are in a position of power or influence over a child, you are in a relationship of trust. You should never do anything to abuse that trust.

You must never:

- Enter into a sexual relationship with any child
- Use your influence or power over any child for your own interests

Always remember that the mental and physical welfare and the safety, health and the future of any child is the primary concern.

Remember that particularly where a relationship of trust exists and where that relationship is close or involves frequent contact, it is possible that either you or the child will develop feelings which are not directly related to the practice of sport. These should not be encouraged in any way. Remember that children will not have the same awareness or judgement to realise what nature of relationship is appropriate and what is not.

Always be alert to ensure you are setting and maintaining the appropriate boundaries in any relationship you have with a child.

You must not, or allow other adults to, spend time alone with a child away from other children.

You must not take a child alone on a journey, however short, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If it should prove necessary obtain the consent of the child's parent / guardian / carer.

You must not take children to your home.

You must not be present at the home or in the private room or dormitory of a child without the parents or guardian of the child or other responsible adult being present. You must not take a child back to its own home or private room or dormitory on his / her own, or enter a child's room without another adult present, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

You must never share a room with a child on your own.

You must never conduct individual meetings with a child in the child's room or in any other private space without another responsible adult present.

You should not favour one child more than another.

Always remember that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted or manipulated, not only by the child involved, but also by third parties. These could lead to allegations of sexual misconduct or impropriety.

Encourage and foster a child's independence and encourage any children for whom you are responsible to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.

7 - Co-operation

Communicate and co-operate with other sports and allied professions if and when you feel it is in the best interests of the child.

If the child has medical, psychological or other problems, and if appropriate, you should communicate and co-operate with the appropriate medical or other practitioners in the care and management of such problems.

8 - Personal Standards and Personal Appearance

Always display high personal standards.

Always be suitably and appropriately attired and project an image of health, cleanliness and efficiency.

Never smoke or drink alcohol when in the company of children.

Always project a favourable image of volleyball and of the EVA.

9 - Language

Never use, or allow profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language.

Never use any form of sexually charged verbal intimacies or sexual innuendoes to, or about children, or when they are present.

10 - Parents

Encourage parents / guardians wherever possible and appropriate to get involved in the welfare of their child.

Encourage the child to keep his / her parents / guardians fully informed of the activities in which the child is involved.

Where a situation occurs which is not adequately covered by these guidelines, or these guidelines are not suitable in the particular circumstance, or you are unsure of what is appropriate or necessary in the particular circumstance please contact Geoff.