

# What to do

## How should you share your concerns?

You may feel reluctant to voice your concerns in case you are wrong or worried about the impact on your child, but if you are concerned you must take action.

- ❖ Speak to the coach or leader in charge – but if you are not confident that they are the appropriate person, speak to someone in a higher position of authority such as the nominated Child Protection/Welfare Officer
- ❖ If you are unhappy about the response you receive, please contact your local County Sports Partnership or one of the other organisations listed on the back cover

If you have a serious concern about a child at risk of abuse, immediately contact the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline, your local children's services department (formerly social services) or the police.

## When should you have concerns?

Here are some examples:

- ❖ Activities where parents are discouraged from staying to watch or becoming involved
- ❖ Behaviour that encourages rough play, sexual innuendo or humiliating punishments
- ❖ Individuals who take charge and operate independently of organisational guidelines
- ❖ Individuals who show favouritism or personally reward particular children
- ❖ Encouragement of inappropriate physical contact
- ❖ Poor communication and lack of parental involvement, leaving you feeling uneasy and uninformed
- ❖ Children who drop out or stop going for no apparent reason
- ❖ Invitations for children to spend time alone with staff or volunteers (or even to visit their home)

# Parents' Code

## Parents' Code of Practice – What will the club/organisation expect of you?

- ❖ Make sure your child has the correct equipment and clothing (including waterproofs/sun hat/sun cream – as appropriate)
- ❖ Provide your child with a suitable drink
- ❖ Inform the coach or activity leader of any special requirements your child may have
- ❖ Inform them of any injury, illness or medical condition and make sure your child has the required medication to hand
- ❖ Provide them with emergency contact details and inform them immediately should these change
- ❖ Be punctual when dropping off and collecting your child
- ❖ If watching the session, always be encouraging and respect all participants, coaches, officials, volunteers and other parents
- ❖ Take an active interest in your child's participation and progress in the activity or sport

## How could you get more involved in your child's team/club?

Junior sports clubs rely heavily on parents and other volunteers to provide and maintain the services they offer to young people. Most clubs are run by a small number of volunteers and are extremely grateful for further support, especially from parents. Getting involved needn't mean a major commitment and there are many different ways that you could offer support - eg club administration, team management, first aid, refereeing, coaching, grounds maintenance or providing refreshments.

As outlined in this leaflet, it is obviously important that you are properly screened and are given the opportunity to gain the right skills, knowledge and qualifications. Good clubs/organisations offer volunteer support and training programmes. Why not contact a member of your child's team/club and see how you can help?

# Useful Contacts

## Contact details

**NSPCC**  
CHILD PROTECTION  
**HELPLINE**  
0808 800 5000

Tel: 0808 800 5000

If you have serious concerns about a child, please call the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: a free 24 hour service providing counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse.

**ChildLine**  
0800 1111

Childline is the free helpline for children and young people in the UK to call to talk about any problems or worries. Childline is a service provided by the NSPCC.

**Child Protection in Sport Unit**  
Tel: 0116 234 7278  
Email: [CPSU@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:CPSU@nspcc.org.uk)  
[www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

The Child Protection in Sport Unit's mission is to safeguard the welfare of children and young people in sport and to promote their well-being.

## County Sports Partnerships

A network of 7 County Sports Partnerships (CSPs) is working across the South East region to raise the quality of sport and physical activity, widen access and increase participation. Each CSP has a lead Child Protection Officer.

**Berkshire Sport**

Tel: 0118 3766135  
[www.berkshiresport.com](http://www.berkshiresport.com)

**Bucks Sport**

Tel: 01296 585219  
[www.buckssport.org](http://www.buckssport.org)

**SPORT**  
HAMPSHIRE & IOW

Tel: 01962 845020  
[www.sporthamshireiow.co.uk](http://www.sporthamshireiow.co.uk)

**KENT SPORTS**  
DEVELOPMENT UNIT  
[www.kentsport.org](http://www.kentsport.org)

Tel: 01622 605054  
[www.kentsport.org](http://www.kentsport.org)

**OXFORDSHIRE SPORTS**

Tel: 01865 467251  
[www.oxfordshiresport.org](http://www.oxfordshiresport.org)

**ACTIVE SURREY**  
SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

Tel: 01483 518944  
[www.activesurrey.com](http://www.activesurrey.com)

**sussex**  
Every sport has its heroes

Tel: 01273 644101  
[www.sussexsport.org](http://www.sussexsport.org)

**Kidscape**  
Tel: 020 7730 3300

Website: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
Provides information for parents on bullying and keeping children safe. They also operate a bullying helpline for parents, Monday to Friday, 10am – 4pm.

# A Guide for Parents and Carers

# Safeguarding & Protecting Children and Young People in Sport:

Play Sport, Stay Safe



# Qualifications

## Introduction

Children and young people benefit greatly from taking part in sport and leisure activities, which give them the opportunity to be healthy and active, to have fun, to learn new skills and to make new friends.

With so many leisure activities to choose from in a local community, we have produced this guide to help you to make your decision and find activities that your children will enjoy and where they will be safe from harm.

### What questions should you ask?

A good club or organisation will welcome questions about their activities and issues around safety. All clubs and organisations should have a child protection policy that describes steps they have taken to keep children and young people safe.

### Are staff and volunteers appropriately qualified?

All coaches and leaders should have up to date qualifications, which are recognised by the relevant Governing Body of Sport (eg Football Association, England Netball) and are appropriate for the activity and level of ability being coached.

All staff and volunteers should have attended recognised training courses in child protection and health and safety.

### Are the staff and volunteers suitable to work with children and young people?

All staff and volunteers should have gone through a proper screening or recruitment process to assess their suitability to work with children and young people. This should include a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check, reference check and an interview.

# Policies and Procedures

## Are there formal Codes of Conduct?

All clubs and organisations should have written codes of ethics and behaviour, which outline expectations of good practice for anyone working with children and young people. An environment in which bullying, shouting, racism and/or sexism are allowed to take place is not acceptable.

Clubs may also have codes of conduct for participants and for parents, carers and spectators that describe what is expected of them.

There should be a process for responding to breaches of the codes of conduct.

## How can children and their parents or carers voice their concerns?

All clubs and organisations should have a child protection policy outlining their procedures for dealing with poor practice and/or possible abuse. They should tell you where to go or what to do if you or your child has any worries.

Clubs and organisations should have a designated Child Protection /Welfare Officer as the first point of contact if you have any concerns.

If you are unhappy about the way your concern is dealt with, contact any of the organisations listed overleaf.

## Does the organisation have a clear health and safety policy?

All clubs and organisations should have a health and safety policy to ensure that there is a fully stocked first aid box at all activities, a coach or leader is qualified in first aid or a qualified first aider is at the site, and that a risk assessment has been carried out to check that the facility and equipment are safe. The club should comply with Governing Body of Sport requirements and guidance for the particular activity.

## Would they be able to contact me in an emergency?

A club or organisation should ask you to complete a registration form when your child joins with emergency contact details and information about any medical conditions or special requirements your child may have.

# Changing and Travel

## How does the organisation provide for intimate care needs?

In the case of very young children, or disabled children, you should check out arrangements and routines for toileting, changing and administering medication. You should discuss any specific requirements your child may have, and how these will be managed, when you first contact the club or organisation.

## What happens if my child is involved in a trip or away fixture?

You should be informed of arrangements for every trip, even short journeys, and you should always be asked for your consent. Information should include arrangements for transport to and from the venue, equipment and refreshments required, and so on.

## Does the organisation have a changing room policy?

Clubs and organisations should make sure that a minimum of two adults of the same gender is present when participants are being supervised in a changing room environment.

Boys and girls should have access to separate changing facilities.

Parents/carers of children and young people with special needs should be consulted to discuss changing and assistance that may be required.

## Does the organisation have a photography policy?

Clubs and organisations often use photographs to promote activities and achievements and may use video as a coaching aid. A photography policy should be in place to protect against the inappropriate use of such images.

The club/organisation should explain how images will be used and ask you to give your written consent for photographs and/or video footage of your child to be taken.

If you are attending an event, the club/organisation should ask you to register if you wish to take photographs and/or video footage on the day (whether using a camera, video camera, mobile phone, etc).

## Does the organisation have a policy guiding use of electronic communication and text messaging?

Coaches and leaders should follow good practice and send emails or text messages to parents/carers rather than to children and young people directly.

In some cases it may be considered acceptable to send emails or text messages to children of 11 years and over but all communications should be copied to parents/carers as well as someone holding a recognised position of responsibility within the club or organisation.

## Is the club/organisation working towards formal accreditation?

You might see or hear reference to Clubmark (or other sports-specific accreditation schemes). Clubmark is a nationally recognised scheme that is being actively promoted by Sport England and many Governing Bodies of Sport.

Clubmark recognises junior sports clubs that meet high quality standards and have succeeded in meeting a number of essential criteria for a high quality sports club.

Clubmark accreditation helps empower parents and carers to choose a safe and friendly club for their children to enjoy and participate in sport.

# Communication

