



# TRAINING KIT

TO PREVENT AND REACT  
TO SITUATIONS OF POTENTIAL  
**SEXUAL VIOLENCE**  
AGAINST **CHILDREN AND**  
**YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPORT**



European Commission (Erasmus+) & Council of Europe (Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport)

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# TRAINING KIT

## TO PREVENT AND REACT TO SITUATIONS OF POTENTIAL SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPORT

— This training kit has been developed as part of the European Union (EU) and Council of Europe (COE) joint project, Pro Safe Sport+ “Put an end to sexual harassment and abuse against children in sport” which complements the other awareness-raising resources being developed by the project (see below). It provides information and training content **to help those in positions of influence in the field of sport to prevent and react to situations of potential sexual violence in sport.**

### Target groups

- ▶ Trainers / instructors
- ▶ Sport leaders
- ▶ Coaches
- ▶ Physical education teachers

### Objectives

- ▶ Understand what sexual violence is in the field of sport so as to prevent it from happening
- ▶ React appropriately in cases of sexual violence or suspicion of sexual violence
- ▶ Provide information on the existing support services and / or helplines
- ▶ Implement preventive measures – avoid / reduce risk situations

### Content

— The training kit contains a set of six factsheets:

- ▶ **1. Facts and figures** – sexual violence against children and young people in sport
- ▶ **2. Legal and regulatory frameworks** – which legislation, conventions, regulatory frameworks, standards and good practice guidelines help us to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children and young people?
- ▶ **3. Protecting victims** – how to identify sexual violence
- ▶ **4. Protecting victims** – responding to concerns or allegations about sexual violence
- ▶ **5. Preventing sexual violence** – preventing sexual violence against children and young people in and through sport
- ▶ **6. Education and raising awareness** – how to raise awareness about sexual violence in sport and how to introduce the subject for discussion

— Please note that some boxes have to be adapted to countries' particular contexts (specific definitions and legal framework information, legal requirements to report concerns about/allegations of sexual violence and support services).

### Stop sexual abuse of children in sport : Pro Safe Sport +

**The “Pro Safe Sport+” EU-COE joint project calls for a renewed political attention and for the development of policies and strategic actions to prevent and combat sexual violence against children in sport.**

More precisely, it aims at increasing the commitment of both governmental and non-governmental organisations (public authorities dealing with sport and children's rights, sports organisations and other interested organisations) towards this topic through awareness-raising tools and capacity-building resources.

In addition to this training kit, other materials have been developed:

- ▶ **A video-clip**
- ▶ **An online resource centre to promote existing practices and to provide concrete advice**
- ▶ **A pool of European experts**

**We encourage you to use these resources,  
support this initiative and spread the world!**

**GET INVOLVED!**

[www.coe.int/sport/PSS](http://www.coe.int/sport/PSS)

 [@ProSafeSport](https://twitter.com/ProSafeSport)

 [pro-safe-sport@coe.int](mailto:pro-safe-sport@coe.int)

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*The opinions expressed in this work are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe.*

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# FACTS AND FIGURES



## Sexual violence against children and young people in sport

### — What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence is a broad term that includes sexual harassment and sexual abuse, and can be defined as a sexual act that is committed or attempted by another person without freely given consent of the victim or against someone who is unable to consent or refuse (Basile *et al.*, 2014). Sexual abuse is usually defined as any sexual activity involving a child that does not fully understand, is unable to give informed consent to, or is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent. Sexual harassment refers to behaviour towards an individual or group that involves sexualised verbal, non-verbal or physical behaviour, whether intended or unintended, legal or illegal, that is based upon an abuse of power and trust and that is considered by the victim or a bystander to be unwanted or coerced (International Olympic Committee, 2007). Non-contact sexual acts (e.g. posing for pornographic photographs or online grooming) are included in this concept.

### — How often does it happen?

Research suggests that one in five children or young people in Europe are victims of some form of sexual violence (Council of Europe, 2007). In sport, research on this topic is relatively new and coming from a small selection of countries only. Studies surveying sexual harassment in sport reveal prevalence estimates between 3% and 52%, and for sexual abuse between 0.2% and 9.7% (Parent & Fortier, 2017). The wide variation in estimates can be explained by the differences in methodology and definitions used. Whether these wide variations result from real differences in the risk of being subjected to sexual abuse/violence in the different cultures reported on or from conceptual differences remains unclear. In any case, if studies include abuse by peers and non-contact cases in their definition of sexual violence, this is likely to raise the prevalence rates significantly.

### — Who are the victims of sexual violence in sport?

Sexual violence can be targeted at any athlete regardless of age, sport ability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, social class, education level, sexual orientation or disability. Although sexual violence is still often pictured as a “male perpetrator and female victim” problem, recent studies found no or only small prevalence differences between victimhood in boys and girls in sport (Parent & Fortier, 2017; Vertommen *et al.*, 2016). Studies show that young athletes competing at international level report more experiences with sexual violence in sport than athletes who compete at lower level. Also, vulnerable subgroups such as LGBT athletes, ethnic minority and disabled athletes are more at risk of being victims of sexual violence in sport.

### — Who are the perpetrators of sexual violence in sport?

Both men and women and young people are perpetrators of sexual violence. Coaches and other entourage members are often perpetrators of sexual abuse, but peer athletes are more likely to be perpetrators of sexual harassment than coaches (Mountjoy *et al.*, 2016). Sexual harassment by peer athletes often involves more than one perpetrator. However, when coaches are involved in incidents of sexual violence against children or young people in sport, incidents tend to be more severe (Vertommen *et al.*, 2017).

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## — What are the risk factors of sexual violence in sport?

Sports are characterised by unique structures and cultures that are infused with a high tolerance of random incidents of physical violence and injuries (all considered part and parcel of the “rough and tumble” of the game) and unequal power relationships between coaches and athletes and authoritarian leadership. Together with the male-dominated gender ratio, the often required physical contact and the reward structures, these conditions contribute to a climate that is conducive to sexual violence against children and young athletes.

There is a context of potential risk in sports, such as:

- ▶ changing rooms
- ▶ showers
- ▶ carpooling
- ▶ overnight stays during training camps or competitions.

Still, very few people associate sports with sexual violence. Organisational factors which influence increased risk of sexual violence and harassment include: a sport culture where inappropriate sexual behaviour is tolerated; bystanders ignore its signs or tacitly approve of it; discrimination and gender inequality are accepted. (Mountjoy *et al.*, 2016).

Disclosing experiences of sexual violence in sport is difficult. The taboo is maybe even bigger than in other settings, as athletes are supposed to be strong and vulnerability is considered a weakness. Boundless ambition of young promising athletes make them vulnerable and will maintain the secrecy introduced by the perpetrator, as the child fears the negative consequences (such as having to leave sport) when the secret is disclosed.

## — Are some sports more at risk than others?

Often it is thought that contact and/or individual sports are more at risk than other sports. However, to date, there is no scientific evidence that this is true. The amount of clothing, cover, touching and sport type are not risk factors for sexual harassment or abuse in sport (Fasting K. *et al.*, 2004).

## — What is the impact?

Based on studies outside sport, we know that experiencing childhood or adolescent sexual violence can have a devastating impact on short and long-term physical, psychological and social health. Illness and injury, performance loss, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, self-harm, low self-esteem, behavioural problems, learning difficulties, elimination disorders, disruptive, impulsive control and conduct disorders, attachment problems, anxiety, depression and a higher risk of suicide are all possible outcomes of sexual violence. There is no reason to assume that experiencing this in the context of sport leads to less serious consequences than sexual violence outside of it.

There is an organisational impact to sexual violence. Reputational damage, dropout of athletes, loss of sponsorship are some of the negative outcomes at organisational level.

## — Key References

Basile K. *et al.*, “Sexual violence surveillance: uniform definitions and recommended data elements (2.0)”, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Atlanta, 2014.

Council of Europe, *Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse*, 2007.

International Olympic Committee, *Consensus Statement on Sexual Harassment and Abuse in Sport*, Lausanne: IOC, 2007 (Definitions are updated in the 2016 IOC consensus).

Mountjoy M. *et al.*, The IOC Consensus Statement: Harassment and abuse (non-accidental violence) in sport, *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 50, 2016, pp. 1019–1029; <http://doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2016-096121>.

Parent S., Disclosure of sexual abuse in sport organizations: a case study, *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse* 20(3), 2011; <http://doi.org/10.1080/10538712.2011.573459>.

Parent S. & Fortier K., Prevalence of interpersonal violence against athletes in the sport context. *Current Opinion in Psychology* 16(16), 2017, pp. 165–169; <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.05.012>.

Vertommen T. *et al.*, Profiling perpetrators of interpersonal violence against children in sport based on a victim survey, *Child Abuse & Neglect* 63, 2017, pp.172–182; <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2016.11.029>.

Vertommen T. *et al.*, Interpersonal violence against children in sport in the Netherlands and Belgium, *Child Abuse and Neglect* 51, 2016, pp. 223–236; <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2015.10.006>.

Fasting K., Brackenridge C. H. and Sundgot-Borgen J., Prevalence of sexual harassment among Norwegian female elite athletes in relation to sport type, *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, vol. 39, 2004, pp. 373–386.

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# LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS



Which legislation, conventions, regulatory frameworks, standards and good practice guidelines help us to prevent and respond to sexual violence against children and young people?

## — The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children and young people everywhere are entitled to.

All European countries are signatories and must report on implementation to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Every child and young person has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. The convention must be seen as a whole: all the rights are linked and no right is more important than another. The right to relax and play (Article 31) and the right to freedom of expression (Article 13) have equal importance as the right to be safe from violence (Article 19) and the right to education (Article 28).

## — Civil and Criminal Law

Civil law is a body of laws of the state which regulate private matters. Criminal law is a body of rules and statutes that defines behaviour prohibited by a government because it threatens and harms public safety and welfare. It also establishes punishments for breaking the law. In some countries there is what is called a "statute of limitations" which defines the time period for an individual who has been a victim of sexual violence to file a complaint. See your country context box for information.

## — Safe Sport International - Declaration of Principles (2014)

The Brunel Declaration sets out the principles which should underpin the protection of all athletes, including young athletes, from all forms of violence in sport.

## — The Council of Europe Lanzarote Convention (2007)

The Council of Europe Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, also known as "the Lanzarote Convention", requires criminalisation of all kinds of sexual offences against children and young people. It sets out that states in Europe and beyond shall adopt specific legislation and take measures to prevent sexual violence, to protect child victims and to prosecute perpetrators. The Lanzarote Committee is the body established to monitor whether parties effectively implement the Lanzarote Convention. To see the most current information on all of the states which have ratified the Lanzarote Convention go to:

[www.coe.int/en/web/children/convention](http://www.coe.int/en/web/children/convention)

## — The International Olympic Committee consensus statement: harassment and abuse (non-accidental violence) in sport (2016)

Builds on its previous consensus on sexual harassment and abuse in sport (2007) and makes specific reference to the protection of children and young people. In 2016 the IOC strengthened its guidance to international federations and National Olympic Committees.

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## — The International Safeguards for Children in Sport (2014)

In 2001, the NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit in the UK developed a set of Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport which benchmark that government funded sports bodies have appropriate safeguards in place.

Subsequently, Unicef UK has led a partnership of organisations to define the core components/pillars of safeguarding which need to be put in place to ensure that children and young people are protected from all forms of violence (including sexual violence) in and through sport.

These safeguards are: policy, procedures to respond, training, communication, equality issues, communicating with and listening to children and young people, prevention – safe recruitment and selection/safe events plans, monitoring and evaluation. They have been tested with over 50 sports bodies around the world and are becoming adopted by a range of sports bodies. A guidance document for organisations was produced in 2016.



### Country context

(to be completed according to country-specific context)

- ▶ Definitions: of a child and of sexual violence in civil and criminal law
- ▶ Main legislation, e.g. criminal law, civil law
- ▶ Statute of limitations for sexual offences:
- ▶ Legal sanctions:
- ▶ Government/statutory guidance:
- ▶ Professional/voluntary sector standards/guidance:
- ▶ Sport governance and integrity frameworks:

## — EU Directive 2011/93/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography

This directive contains, *inter alia*, provisions to ensure that when recruiting a person for professional or organised voluntary activities involving children, the criminal record will be checked. See the directive here:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32011L0093>

## — Key References

UNCRC 1989

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

Committee on the Rights of the Child

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/CRCIntro.aspx>

The Council of Europe - Lanzarote Convention 2007

<http://www.coe.int/en/web/children/lanzarote-convention>

The International Safeguards for Children in Sport 2014

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/sport-for-development/safeguarding-in-sport/>

The Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/standards-for-safeguarding-and-protecting-children-in-sport/>

The International Olympic Committee consensus statement: harassment and abuse (non-accidental violence) in sport

<http://bjism.bmj.com/content/bjsports/50/17/1019.full.pdf>

Safe Sport International Principles

<http://www.safesportinternational.com/principles/>

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32011L0093&from=EN>

The UNESCO Charte Internationale de l'Education Physique et du Sport  
[http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/eps/EPSfrançais/EVENEMENTS/charte\\_internationale\\_de\\_l.htm](http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/eps/EPSfrançais/EVENEMENTS/charte_internationale_de_l.htm)

Kazan Action Plan from the Ministers meeting at the Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI), Kazan (13-15 July 2017), (UNESCO)  
<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0025/002527/252725e.pdf>

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# PROTECTING VICTIMS



## How to identify sexual violence

### — Why children and young people find it hard to speak out

Sexual violence is rarely something that children and young people are able to talk to an adult about while it is happening to them:

- ▶ they may be forced into sexual acts by someone in a position of trust (male or female) and a position of power, such as a coach, doctor, an older team mate or leader;
- ▶ they may be threatened about the consequences of telling someone - either to hurt them or their family;
- ▶ they may be groomed by an adult building an emotional connection with them to gain their trust and may even believe they are in a “real” relationship with them. Abusers often groom the child’s family and sports team making it even harder for the child to feel they will be believed;
- ▶ in sport children and young people may be dependent on the adult for selection or for participation in competition but in some sports (like gymnastics) the athletes depend on the adult for safety and well-being. This is a big issue when grooming;
- ▶ for talented young people who dream of success in sport this psychological bond may be even harder to break;
- ▶ they may feel ashamed and even be made to feel they are in some way responsible for what has happened;
- ▶ in some sports settings there can be a culture of ‘initiation ceremonies’ which involve sexual violence. This may also be sanctioned or ignored by adults, making it difficult for a child to speak out against older peers.

### — Signs of sexual violence

Firstly it is important to be able to identify what is normal sexual behaviour for different stages of development. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) has some useful information about this:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/healthy-sexual-behaviour-children-young-people/>

#### Behavioural signs of sexual violence may include:

- ▶ sexualised behaviour which is significantly more advanced than you'd normally expect for a child of a particular age;
- ▶ sexual interest in adults, children or young people of very different ages to their own;
- ▶ forceful or aggressive sexual behaviour;
- ▶ compulsive habits;
- ▶ signs of being afraid of a particular adult;
- ▶ reports from school or sports club that their behaviour is affecting their progress and achievement;
- ▶ poor sleep;
- ▶ being withdrawn;
- ▶ risk-taking behaviour.

#### Physical indicators:

- ▶ bed wetting, soiling the bed;
- ▶ sexually transmitted diseases;
- ▶ misuse of alcohol or drugs.

#### Psychological indicators:

- ▶ mental health issues – anxiety and/or depression;
- ▶ self harm, thoughts about suicide;
- ▶ eating disorders.

Remember that sexual violence may include contact or non-contact abuse and may involve grooming in person or online. The indicators may include physical, emotional/psychological and behavioural warning signs.

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## — Signs of grooming and inappropriate behaviour in adults or young people may include:

- ▶ giving special attention to one or more children or young people;
- ▶ giving gifts or special favours;
- ▶ offering to provide the transport for the child or young person to training, matches or away events/competitions;
- ▶ befriending children or young people who are not their family members on social media sites;
- ▶ testing boundaries of sexually appropriate behaviour, language or humour.

Signs in children and young people include those previously described but you may also notice a child receiving expensive gifts that they cannot account for or being unusually secretive about who they are seeing or where they are going.

## — Grooming for abuse

Children and young people can be groomed for abuse by adults or other young people. Grooming behaviour can be difficult to distinguish from the behaviour of any other trusted individual in a sports setting. 'Groomers' may spend a great deal of time, months or even years, building a relationship with the child's family, social circle, including sports club colleagues. They may seek out positions of trust and make themselves invaluable club/sport members. Grooming may take place online and involve non-contact abuse. This is why it is so important that sports clubs and venues have in place **codes of conduct or behaviour** for all adults and young people both on and off line. These codes should clearly set out what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. For more information please refer to: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/37327383\\_The\\_grooming\\_process\\_in\\_sport\\_Case\\_studies\\_of\\_sexual\\_harassment\\_and\\_abuse](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/37327383_The_grooming_process_in_sport_Case_studies_of_sexual_harassment_and_abuse)

## — Key References

Pro Safe Sport website: [www.coe.int/sport/PSS](http://www.coe.int/sport/PSS)

The International Olympic Committee has produced written and film resources to help adults (coaches and sport federations) to put safeguards in place for athletes of all ages and to identify and respond to sexual harassment and abuse:

<http://sha.olympic.org/home.html>  
<https://hub.olympic.org/safeguarding/>

The NSPCC's Child Protection in Sport Unit has a website which has many useful resources to help parents and adults in sport to identify and respond to a range of concerns about sexual violence:

<https://the cpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2017/sexually-harmful-behaviour-by-young-people-in-sport/>  
<https://the cpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2015/webinar-understanding-grooming-for-abuse/>  
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/child-sexual-exploitation/>

## — Key messages

Children and young people usually don't tell but rely on adults to see the signs in them and in the behaviour of their abusers. It is essential that sports bodies put in place codes of conduct which set out acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for adults and young people:

- ▶ there is NO CONSENT for a sexual relationship when it comes to a child or young person;
- ▶ men, women, teens, boys and girls may sexually abuse a child or a teen;
- ▶ children and young people have clear limits when it comes to their own bodies and these limits must be respected;
- ▶ children and young people have rights and these must be in the centre of all activities;
- ▶ success belongs to the athlete. Coaches and entourage are doing their job and/or supporting the child or young person;
- ▶ sport is ONE of the many environments in which children and young people develop but not the ONLY one. Family, friends and school environments must continue to be part of the athlete's life as their sporting level advances;
- ▶ children and young people have dreams, opinions, ideas and a clear voice about everything that affects them. They must be listened to and taken into consideration in everything to do with their own development;
- ▶ you seek help if you break a bone - you can also seek help if you feel emotional pain.

## — Sexually harmful behaviour in young people

Most people are not aware that sexually harmful behaviour is expressed by young people. It is estimated that around one third of sexual abuse is committed by other children and young people (source: Hackett S., 2014, Children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours). It is essential that adults in sport are aware of the signs and know how to respond.

In sport there have been reported incidents of initiation or 'hazing' rituals in sports teams which have involved sexually abusive and harmful behaviour. They affect victims, bystanders and the lives of young perpetrators. These should be treated as both violations of codes of conduct and potentially criminal offences.

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# PROTECTING VICTIMS



## Responding to concerns or allegations about sexual violence


### — Preventing sexual violence in and through sport

Everyone involved in sport for children and young people needs access to information and education to help them to:

- ▶ take practical steps to create a safe, enjoyable, child-centred, trusted environment;
- ▶ identify and respond to concerns about children and young people who may be experiencing sexual violence.

### — How to respond to a child or young person who is experiencing sexual violence or if you have concerns about the behaviour of a colleague

Everyone should be familiar with their organisation's policy and procedures and know who to report their concerns to inside and outside the organisation.

 **Legal requirements to report concerns about/allegations of sexual violence**  
(to be completed according to country-specific context)

### — National organisations should have:

- ▶ a written policy about the protection of children and young people;
- ▶ codes of conduct/behaviour for adults and young people;
- ▶ written procedures for how to respond to all concerns about children and young people including when they disclose sexual violence themselves;
- ▶ complaints and disciplinary procedures;
- ▶ a designated person for child protection who everyone knows how to contact.

Sports clubs must at least ensure that children are aware of their rights and any helplines they can turn to, and ensure that people in the club know who to report their concerns to.

Different countries will have widely differing minimum expectations. There are not always policies and procedures for responding to concerns about children or young people in sport organisations so sport leaders/coaches need to know what is in place such as statutory agency contacts and child/adult helplines.

### — Information sharing and confidentiality

- ▶ Keep reports confidential and only share them on a "need to know basis"
- ▶ Statutory agencies will advise who to share with if they are involved

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## — How to respond to a child or young person who tells you that they are being abused: dos and don'ts

Remember that most children find it extremely hard to tell someone they are experiencing sexual violence.

### It is very important to:

- ▶ keep calm and not show shock or disapproval;
- ▶ listen carefully to what the child or young person says;
- ▶ reassure the child or young person that they were right to tell and what has happened is not their fault;
- ▶ let the child or young person know they are believed;
- ▶ let the child or young person freely recall what they want to say;
- ▶ only ask questions to clarify something you may not have understood – remember that the child or young person may need to be interviewed again as part of a statutory agency /criminal investigation;
- ▶ avoid making any promises that you may not be able to keep such as keeping what the child or young person says as confidential when you have to share this;
- ▶ tell the child or young person what you are going to do next;
- ▶ provide information on other sources of help such as child helplines;
- ▶ pass on the report to your designated person with responsibility for child protection as soon as possible. If they are not available ensure that you pass information to statutory agencies who can take action to investigate the allegations and ensure the child or young person's safety. Take their advice on who should contact the child or young person's parents.

## — Complaints and disciplinary procedures

Successful criminal prosecutions are still very hard to achieve even with the most sophisticated systems, as the threshold of "beyond reasonable doubt" is difficult to attain with vulnerable victims especially as sexual violence often takes place in secret.

National organisations therefore are responsible for dealing with allegations against their own staff and volunteers

So they need to develop policies and procedures to deal with breaches of codes of conduct which are fair through:

- ▶ complaints processes;
- ▶ disciplinary hearings;
- ▶ grievances;
- ▶ appeals.

## — Act on your concerns:

- ▶ know your organisation's procedure and who to report concerns to in and outside the sport;
- ▶ record facts and observations not judgments in as much detail as possible;
- ▶ ensure the record is clear enough for you to recall for possible future criminal proceedings;
- ▶ know who you can turn to outside of your organisation if necessary.

**Respond** – Follow your procedures.

**Record** – Use your reporting form (if you have one), record facts, observations not judgements, in as much detail as possible.

**Report** – Pass on your concerns to your designated person for safeguarding – either at national level or local level depending on your sport's structure. If there isn't one and/or it is an emergency, pass on your concerns to statutory agencies.

## — Help for the child or young person and others who are affected

Sports bodies and statutory agencies should provide information on local and national services for victims, their families and others who have been affected.



### Support services

(to be completed according to country-specific context)

## — Preparing for the effects and aftermath including re-victimisation

### Maintaining a child and young person focused approach

- ▶ Ensure children are not re-victimised through other people's responses and reactions
- ▶ Provide support to them and information for others affected so they understand the organisation and/or statutory agencies' decisions

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# PREVENTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE



Preventing sexual violence against children and young people in and through sport

## — If safeguards aren't put in place what can make sport a more vulnerable context for violence to occur?

- ▶ There may be a lack of regulated boundaries regarding relationships on and off line in sport between adults or young leaders in positions of trust. These need to be subject to codes of conduct so that everyone is clear about boundaries.
- ▶ Sport has been less regulated than more formal settings like schools.
- ▶ It is largely run by volunteers, who may not have access to the information, training and support they need to put safeguards in place; be unaware of the indicators of sexual violence; and may not be confident in how to respond to concerns or allegations.
- ▶ Physical contact as part of coaching practice can present opportunities for unwanted contact if not regulated.
- ▶ The culture in sport means that sexually abusive so-called 'initiation' ceremonies have been accepted as being just part of the sport and not questioned as potentially criminal offences. These can also traumatize child or young person witnesses and adult bystanders.

Advice should be sought from statutory agencies where a risk assessment involves sexual violence or sexually inappropriate behaviour which may require a specialist or forensic assessment.

## — Putting in place practical prevention measures

Creating a high quality, child centred environment where children and young people understand their rights and feel confident to discuss things which worry them is essential to prevent sexual violence.

Parents need to ask questions about their children's sport:

- ▶ coach qualifications;
- ▶ staff/volunteer experience;
- ▶ staff/volunteer background checks.

**'If you wouldn't leave your wallet or purse with a group of strangers you don't know and you have never met, how much more valuable is your child?'**

(Anne Tiivas, Westminster Media Forum, October 2017)

## — Preventative measures

In previous fact sheets we have talked about the steps which need to be taken to prevent sexual violence in sport and to respond to concerns. For organisations, see fact sheet 4.

A good practice example of what safeguards need to be put in place and how to go about this is the International Safeguards for Children in Sport and accompanying guidance for sports governing bodies. These have been tested by over 50 organisations from National Olympic Committees to small sport for development organisations.

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Risks of all forms of abuse increase with a child or young person's performance level, when:

- ▶ children and young people start to travel away from home and normal safeguards;
- ▶ talented and elite young people depend on their coaches and entourages for success and selection;
- ▶ elite sport is characterised by a "win at all costs" approach. Talented children and young people gradually enter an adult performance world where they are "often children by age but adults by way of life. This is referred to as status confusion" (source: Safeguarding YouthSport-ICES 2015 – [www.safeguardingyouthsport.eu](http://www.safeguardingyouthsport.eu));
- ▶ some children and young people are made more at risk of abuse by our lack of awareness and action to safeguard them. For instance, disabled young people who may be dependent on the adults who are abusing them for participation and progression in sport, young people who are LGBT who may be discriminated against, for example their sexual orientation may be misperceived as a sexual risk.

## — The eight safeguards

The International Safeguards for Children in Sport are:

- ▶ Developing your Policy;
- ▶ Procedures for Responding to Safeguarding Concerns;
- ▶ Advice and Support;
- ▶ Minimising Risks to Children and Young People;
- ▶ Guidelines for Behaviour;
- ▶ Recruiting, Training and Communicating;
- ▶ Working with Partners;
- ▶ Monitoring and Evaluation.

The guidance notes provide step by step help and practical advice and examples from a range of organisations across the globe who took part in the pilot. The guidance notes are referenced below.

## — Key References

New IOC resources "Safeguarding athletes from harassment and abuse in sport" IOC Toolkit for IFs and NOCs:

<http://sha.olympic.org/home.html>

You can find the IOC Press release related to the launch, below. The direct link to the toolkit website is here:

<https://hub.olympic.org/safeguarding/>

Download the Safeguarding resources:

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/?s=International+Safeguards+for+Children+in+Sport>

Download the Guidance notes:

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/?s=International+Safeguards+for+Children+in+Sport>

The Netherlands Olympic Committee and Dutch Sports Confederation (NOC\*NSF) has been developing policies and practices to prevent what is called sexual intimidation in Dutch sport since 1996. The toolkit sexual intimidation policy:

<http://www.nocnsf.nl/stream/toolkit-seksuele-intimidatie>

The policy framework a safe and respectful sport environment:

<https://sportplezier.nl>

National Action Plan: Austria's Approach to Fight Sexualised Violence in Sport:

[http://www.100sport.at/de/menu\\_main/news/newsshow-bm-klug-initiiert-strategiegruppe](http://www.100sport.at/de/menu_main/news/newsshow-bm-klug-initiiert-strategiegruppe)

Guide for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment in Sport in the Czech Republic:

<http://www.olympic.cz/upload/files/g9vmztko05-prevence-sex-obtezovani.pdf>

Play by the Rules was developed in 2001 by the South Australian Department for Sport and Recreation as an interactive education and information website on discrimination, sexual harassment and child protection in sport:

<https://www.playbytherules.net.au>

The Irish Sports Council and the Sports Council for Northern Ireland published the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children in Sport in 2000:

[http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/Participation/Code\\_of\\_Ethics/Code\\_of\\_Ethics\\_Manual/](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/Participation/Code_of_Ethics/Code_of_Ethics_Manual/)

## — Assessing organisational risk

Sports organisations need to identify potential risks as part of good governance. Safeguarding risks should form part of this process as well as health and safety. Sports should develop and maintain risk registers. These should both cover assessments of risk and describe controls to minimise or remove potential hazards or risks. For sports events, safeguarding plans should be put in place which are relevant to the competition level.

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2015/safe-sports-events-management-tool/>

## — Assessing risks presented by individuals

This may form part of a recruitment process where safeguarding checks reveal concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children. Equally, concerns may arise during or following safeguarding or a child protection investigation. Sports organisations may need to make an assessment of risk and/or suitability. This must involve a structured approach to assessment informed by good practice which enables an organisation to make informed and defensible decisions. Examples of this include:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2015/rfl-interview-risk-assessment-checklist/>

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/safe-recruitment-and-selection-procedures/>

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# EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS



## How to raise awareness about sexual violence in sport and how to introduce the subject for discussion

**“Everyone in contact with children has a role to play in their protection. They can only do so confidently and effectively if they are aware, have the necessary understanding of, and the opportunity to develop, practice and implement key skills. Organisations providing sporting activities for children have a responsibility to provide training and development opportunities for staff and volunteers”. UNICEF provides a high quality resource for all organisations to use:**

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/wp.content/uploads/2014/10/International-Safeguards-for-Children-in-Sport-version-to-view-online.pdf>

Everybody working with children and young people in sport needs to be provided with education and learning opportunities in order to:

- ▶ understand the signs of sexual violence;
- ▶ know how to respond;
- ▶ know how to report their concerns.

People with more significant responsibilities for safeguarding need both education and support to fulfil their roles.

### — Training qualifications for people delivering training on sexual violence

People delivering sexual violence training should be experienced trainers due to the sensitivity of the topic and the ability to manage the needs of adult learners.

### — Choosing the right training

In a number of countries there is now access to e-learning to provide basic information to a number of learners. This will generally provide an introduction to safeguarding including sexual violence.

The next levels of training are:

- ▶ introductory;
- ▶ basic;
- ▶ specialist;
- ▶ continuous professional development.

All staff and volunteers who work directly with young people should be provided with the opportunity to undertake face to face training. The basic training includes:

- ▶ how to identify signs of violence;
- ▶ how to respond to concerns;
- ▶ how to report them.

Training needs to be tailored for particular roles such as coaching.

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/training-events/basic-safeguarding-training/>

<http://www.ukcoaching.org/site-tools/workshops/about-our-workshops/safeguarding-and-protecting-children>

#### Specialist

Where national sports organisations or clubs have designated people in safeguarding roles they should have specialist training.

#### Continuous professional development

For coaches and others in roles working directly with children they should have access to opportunities to keep their knowledge up to date. This might be known as continuous professional development. Topics might include online abuse, working with elite athletes or homophobic bullying.

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/training-events/continual-professional-development/>

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## — Key considerations for awareness raising

- ▶ Be clear about the nature of the issue and why this is a problem – provide the supporting evidence and case studies to bring the issue alive.
- ▶ Be clear on the outcomes/changes you want to see and that this is realistic and achievable.
- ▶ Identify potential partners/supporters.
- ▶ Be clear who your audience is – for example children, young people, parents, coaches, the general public or government.
- ▶ Agree clear, simple messages for your audience.
- ▶ Decide on what supporting materials you want to create and for whom – agree a budget and costings for the different elements research previous campaigns on your subject and find out what has worked well with these.
- ▶ Decide on the communication methods you want to use; website, printed materials, or social media.
- ▶ Consult with key stakeholders.
- ▶ Agree how success will be monitored and evaluated at the outset.
- ▶ Agree the timescale and when the campaign will end.
- ▶ If an organisation is to make an awareness campaign they need to be able to provide support. If you encourage a young person to disclose via a campaign but then you cannot provide the support needed, you might cause more harm than help.

## — “Start to talk”: a call to stop child sexual abuse in sport

It is estimated that in Europe, around one in five children are victims of some form of sexual violence. Unfortunately, sexual abuse is seldom reported and often concealed.

“Start to talk” is a call to clubs, federations, sports leaders, coaches, athletes, children and their families to contribute to preventing and responding to sexual abuse of children in sport. Those who join the call commit to take concrete steps to keep children and sport safe from abuse. “Start to talk” is part of the Council of Europe’s work for the rights of children and their protection from violence. It supports the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Website: [www.starttotalk.org](http://www.starttotalk.org)

## — Specific considerations for sensitive topics including sexual violence campaigns

- ▶ Ensure that you involve experts in the design and development of your campaign and resources.
- ▶ Where resources are developed for children and young people they must be: age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate; culturally sensitive; accessible in a safe and supportive environment. For young children this should involve parents or other trusted adults such as teachers, trained staff/volunteers. They must also be tested with their audience before being rolled out.
- ▶ Children, young people and adults who may be affected by the subject matter must be signposted to sources of information and help such as confidential helplines and specialist agencies.
- ▶ Where education and training programmes are developed, these must be delivered by people who have been suitably trained and/or qualified.

## — Pro Safe Sport + online resource centre

The Pro Safe Sport + online resource centre is a one-stop shop for the development of preventive and protective policies and measures in Europe. It provides concrete advice and promotes existing awareness raising tools and capacity-building resources to support public authorities, sport organisations and other interested stakeholders in their efforts to stop child sexual abuse in sport. A large selection of practices and initiatives is referenced, dealing with six strategic areas of action:

- ▶ developing and implementing a child protection strategy;
- ▶ educational programmes;
- ▶ awareness raising initiatives;
- ▶ codes of conduct and codes of ethics;
- ▶ minimising risk;
- ▶ support systems and case management.

Website: [www.coe.int/sport/PSS/](http://www.coe.int/sport/PSS/)

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

**[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)**

The European Union is a unique economic and political partnership between 28 democratic European countries. Its aims are peace, prosperity and freedom for its 500 million citizens – in a fairer, safer world. To make things happen, EU countries set up bodies to run the EU and adopt its legislation. The main ones are the European Parliament (representing the people of Europe), the Council of the European Union (representing national governments) and the European Commission (representing the common EU interest).

**<http://europa.eu>**

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