

Best Practice Guidance

Overnight, Staying Away & Hosting

This policy deals with a number of matters which come under the general heading of Travel including travel, supervision and behaviour on away matches or on club organised extended trips away. It also sets out the NGB/Branch/Club's policy in regard to acting as a host or being hosted.

Overnight & Away trips

The level of supervision for overnight trips away will be of no more than 6 children per adult. There will be at least one adult of each gender with mixed groups. The supervision proposals (which will require to be approved by the person tasked with signing off on away trips) will include the proposed child to adult ratio and the names of the adults who will act as supervisors. All adults who travel on away trips will be carefully chosen, using the recruitment and selection procedures in appendix 4. The Club/Branch/NGB will appoint one adult to be the Group Leader who will have overall responsibility for ensuring that all Child Protection policies and procedures are complied with.

The roles and responsibilities of adults participating in away trips will be clearly defined.

Written permission of parents/guardians allowing their child/children to take part will be obtained for all overnight away trips. This will include permission to travel and any medical/special needs of the child (including permission to treat the child).

Children and parents/guardians will be required to sign a behaviour agreement prior to taking part in the trip.

A meeting with parents/guardians and participants will be held with those tasked with the management of the trip to communicate travel times, accommodation arrangements, competition details (where applicable), other activities, gear requirements, special needs (medical or dietary), and any other necessary details, contact details, codes of conduct, etc.

Away Matches

Similar to away trips, the level of supervision for away matches will be no more than 6 children per adult. There will be at least one adult of each gender with mixed groups. All adults who travel to away matches will be carefully chosen, using the Club/Branch/NGB's recruitment and selection procedures. One of the adults will be appointed as Team Manager. He/she will have overall responsibility for the conduct of all members of the team (including adult supervisors).

Written permission of parents/guardians allowing their child/children to take part should be obtained for all away matches. This will include permission to travel and any medical/special needs of the child (including permission to treat the child).

Children will be reminded of their obligation to abide by the relevant Code of Conduct for Children.

Accommodation for Away Trips

Where practicable, the proposed accommodation will be checked out in person beforehand to ensure that separate and appropriate sleeping arrangements can be made in advance. If it's not possible, there should be checks of the accommodation on line and a careful read of the reviews followed by written confirmation that the booking is exactly what was reserved in the original reservation.

Adults should not share a room with a child. Where the presence of an adult is needed there should be more than one child in the room with the adult. If children are sharing a room, it should be with those of the same groupings age and gender and in separate beds.

Adults should knock before entering rooms.

All group socialisation should take place in communal areas (i.e. no boys in girls' rooms and vice versa).

General Requirements

Young players should be under reasonable supervision at all times and should never leave the venue or go unsupervised without prior permission.

Alcoholic drink, smoking and other illegal substances / activities are forbidden to participants. Leaders should act as role models in this respect.

On away trips, coaches will be accountable to the Group Leader/Team Manager in all non performance-related matters.

In the event of an occurrence Accident and/or Incident Reports should be completed by the Group Leader/Team Manager.

Hosting

Being a host family or being hosted is an integral part of many sports and, if handled appropriately, can add to a child's enjoyment and experience at a competition. Hosting can be a challenging role but also very rewarding. Special care should be taken in the selection of homes for overnight stays. A host should be provided with as much information about the child/children staying with them and details of the competition. More than one child should be placed with each host family. The family in turn should agree to provide references and be vetted when and if this is available. In addition, organisers should follow the recruitment and selection that is also outlined in this code.

When arranging for events/trips abroad, the Club, Branch or Tennis Ireland will be dependent on the ability of the host organisation to access vetting services and obtain appropriate references. It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to provide the hosts with the relevant information on the child and details of what is expected.

Host families should:

- Agree to abide by the National Governing Bodies Code of Conduct.
- Consent to appropriate checks and references.
- Attend host family meetings before competitions or events.
- Provide a safe and supportive environment for young people.

Tennis Ireland/Branches/Clubs should:

- Provide a travel pack to hosting families.
- Check out references with hosting families.
- Provide an itinerary of the trip.
- Gather information on destination and venue.

Young People:

- Should sign a behaviour agreement.
- Should not be asked to share a bed or a room with an adult.
- Should not be asked to share a bed with one of his/her peers.
- Should be happy with the arrangements.
- Should show respect to the host families.

Transporting Young People

Many organisations/clubs could not operate without the goodwill of volunteers and parents ensuring that children are transported to events and returned home in a private car. Sport Ireland and Sport NI do not state that coaches/ volunteers can never transport a young person by themselves. They do, however, recommend individuals and organisations recognise the risks and put in place appropriate measures to reduce these risks.

The risks

The vast majority of coaches and volunteers will help out through a genuine desire to see children or their particular sport develop. Unfortunately we must face the reality that a small minority of people will join a sports club as an opportunity to gain access to children. These adults create an air of acceptability about their role, therefore justifying their close contact with children.

Although those who want to abuse children may find it more difficult to do so in a group setting, such as a leisure centre or sports pitch, they can use this time to gain the trust of not only the young person but also other adults, including parents/carers. This is known as 'grooming' or 'entrapment'. Developing credibility is an essential part of any abusers 'grooming process.' An abuser will "groom" the environment i.e. creating a justifiable reason for getting the child alone.

Easy rules to remember when a club are organising transport

- It is good practice to receive informed consent from parents and young people who will be transporting their child, why and how long the journey will take.
- Attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- Alternate drivers if possible and which child is dropped off last.
- Driver should have a point of contact/mobile phone.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
- The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others.
- Drivers representing and volunteering on behalf of a club should be vetted through National Vetting Bureau/Access NI if driving regularly, and therefore meeting the regulated activity criteria.
- Consider the need for booster seats.
- Parents and coaches can also download Sport Irelands Safe Sport App at

https://www.sportireland.ie/Participation/Code_of_Ethics/Code-Of-Ethics-App.

One of the features of the App is a 'Travel Tracker' function. This allows parents and coaches who are driving someone else's child/children home, for example after a training session, to permit the child's parent or guardian to view and have oversight of their location for a specified period of time while they are travelling on a journey.

Personal arrangements between parents

If parents make personal arrangements between themselves this is not the responsibility of the club unless there are particular concerns about a parent's ability to drive for example due to the consumption of alcohol.

The use of booster seats

From 2006, the law in Europe requires all children in cars, vans and other goods vehicles to be carried using an appropriate child restraint until either they have reached the age of 12 years or are 150 cm (5' in Republic of Ireland) and 135 cms (4' 5" in Northern Ireland) or whichever comes first with very few exceptions.

The European law allowed countries to opt for a minimum height of between 135 and 150 cm. For more information visit;

Republic of Ireland: <http://www.rsa.ie/en/RSA/Your-Vehicle/About-your-Vehicle/Example-of-non-Dup/Seat-belts--child-restraints-/>

Northern Ireland: <http://www.childcarseats.org.uk/the-law/>

Signing off on Trips Away

Tennis Ireland, the Branches and the clubs should identify a person who is responsible for signing off on the trip and to ensure that all the necessary policies and procedures are in place prior to travelling to the Event. The Children's Officer, the Designated Liaison Officer should be the last port of call for the Club and the Branches and the National Coordinator should sign off for players travelling to events organized by our NGB.

Reporting on away Trips

The trip Lead Manager in consultation with his assistant supervisors unless there are any important incidents to report, should within 10 days submit a report to the person who has overall charge of trips away for the Club, Branch or NGB.

Supervision, Ratios & Environment

Ensure adequate Adult / Child Ratios:

Good practice dictates that a leader should try to ensure that more than one adult is present. This will help to ensure the safety of the children as well as protect adults.

Adult / Child Ratios:

- Will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the participants and any special needs of the group. A general guide should be 1:8 for 12 years of age and under, 1:10 for 13 years of age and over.
- For trips away Tennis Ireland's guide is 1:6
- There should be at least one adult of each gender with mixed parties.

Environment:

- As stated above, away trips will need higher rates of supervision 1:6 and these should be ensured with the organisers. Children and young people should be supervised at all times.
- Avoid adults being left alone with young participants, if a leader needs to talk separately to a participant this should be done in an open environment, in view of others.
- Respect the privacy of young people while changing. Leaders may only need to enter changing rooms where the participants are very young or require special assistance.
- When necessary, leaders should supervise in pairs or seek assistance. It is the safety and welfare of the participants that is of paramount importance.
- Leaders should not be left alone with young people at the end of a training session. Clearly state times for start and finish of training and/or competitions.
- If late collections occur leaders should remain in pairs until participants have left.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for collection of young people. It should be made clear that the club is responsible for only club activities.
- If a child suffers an injury or accident the parents/ guardians should be informed.

Registration, Dropout & Club Transfers

Loss of club members, including adult transfers, should be monitored. Any unusual or unexpected dropout or club transfer of children or Sports Leaders should be checked out by the Club Children's Officer and/or the governing body. If any concerns regarding a child or children's welfare are raised the matter should be handled in accordance with procedures outlined in this Code.

Accidents & Incidents Template Reporting Form

Name: _____

Name of Organisation / Club: _____

Role: _____

Contact Information (you): _____

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address: _____

Child's Name: _____

Child's DOB: _____

Is there any additional, relevant information to add? YES NO

If yes please state _____

Child's Gender: _____

Parent's / carer's name(s): _____

Contact Information (parents/carers):

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address: _____

Have parent's / carer's been notify of this accident / incident? Yes No

If YES please provide details of what was said/action agreed _____

Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else:

Responding to my own concerns

Responding to concerns raised by someone else

If responding to concerns raised by someone else: Please provide further information below

Name: _____

Position within the sport or relationship to the child: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address: _____

Date and times of accident / incident: _____

Details of the accident / incident or concerns: _____

Include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this accident / incident as fact, opinion or hearsay.

Child's account of the accident / incident: _____

Please provide any witness accounts of the accident / incident: _____

Please provide details of any witnesses to the accident / incident:

Name: _____

Position within the club or relationship to the child: _____

Date of birth (if child): _____

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please provide details of any person involved in this accident / incident or alleged to have caused the accident / incident / injury:

Name: _____

Position within the club or relationship to the child: _____

Date of birth (if child): _____

Address: _____

Eircode: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please provide details of action taken to date: _____

Has the incident been reported to any external agencies? Yes No

If YES please provide further details:

Name of organisation / agency: _____

Contact person: _____

Telephone numbers: _____

Email address: _____

Agreed action or advice given _____

Your Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print name: _____

Contact your organisation's Designated Safeguarding Officer in line with (insert your organisation / club name) reporting procedures.

Filming & Photography

The Filming and Photography guidance provides assistance for organisation/club members on taking and using appropriate images. This guidance is not about preventing parents/guardians and supporters from taking pictures, but rather to ensure that only those who have a right to take photographs do so. This guidance is designed to promote safeguards for any photographic or filming/video activity to minimise the risk of inappropriate taking and use of images.

Definitions:

- Event: may include competition, training session, social function or any activity organised at any level of Tennis.
- Image: refers to all photographic and film/video footage.
- Responsible person: may include the children's officer, head coach, event manager, event controller or facility manager at an event.
- Young people: refers to all people U18; whilst this guidance is designed to minimise risk to U18's this guidance should be used to minimise risks for all players of any age.

Permission to take images

Permission is sought by the sports organisation/club to ensure that young people and parents/carers are aware of when and how their images may be used. Permission can be obtained through:

- Individual permission where permission is sought for a single or specific event and has not been sought generally through membership/competition entry/other contract means.
- General permission granted through completion of membership/competition entry/other contract where permission is included as part of the form.

For third party photographers, film/videographers or other organisations employed to take images each person must complete the Self-Declaration Form. For any other person wishing to use photographic devices at events they must first register their device with the organiser. Each person registering a device will be required to produce photographic identification as proof of identity.

Announcement at events regarding taking and the use of images

The sports organisation/club should ensure the following announcement is read out at the start and during an event to ensure everyone is clearly aware of the need to register:

***“All persons wishing to take photographs or film footage at this event must first register their device(s) with (name of organiser). Please note photographic identification will be required as proof of identity.*”**

If a company/person has been authorised by completing the Self-Declaration Form the following should be included in the announcement:

(Company Name) has been authorised to take photographs of individuals in accordance with sports club/organisation policy.”

Taking images in certain environments

Sports organisation/club members and third party photographers, film/videographers or other organisations shall ensure that images are not taken in such environments considered inappropriate irrespective of any permission sought. In certain cases it may be an offence to take such images.

Taking images using any type of equipment is banned in an area where people are changing or would normally expect their privacy to be recognised. Examples of such areas would include:

- Changing rooms.
- Open changing areas such as ‘villages’
- Individual changing/private cubicles provided for personal use.
- Toilets.
- Medical/Physio treatment rooms.

Flash photography is prohibited in an environment where any performance may be affected or there is the potential for its use to cause harm to the young person.

Types of appropriate images

Only appropriate images of children should be used, for example:

- Posed images such as during trophy ceremonies, presentations or team shots where young people must be wearing t-shirt and shorts/tracksuits.
- Action shots of young people where the focus is on the participation in the sport, not the player.

Images of children should not be taken where the pose is inappropriate e.g. open legs; bending over from behind, etc.

Safe use of images

Images can be taken for a variety of purposes, including for administration or personal use, publicising the sport or aiding skill development. Anyone taking images should be aware of action poses that may be inappropriate; these are not suitable for use/publication.

Types of images and appropriate use:

- Personal images – images taken by parents/guardians or other family members during an event as a celebration of a young person's attendance or achievement. This includes the use of a professional photographer, with permission, taking images for the personal use of those attending. Other people may be included in an image and we expect parents/guardians and other family members to respect this by not distributing images publically.
- Training images – these are images or footage taken during a training sessions or during an event specifically to aid the young person in the development of a skill or technique. These images should be taken by a qualified coach or a person specifically appointed by the young person's coach. These images may be used as examples of technique or mastery of a skill for teaching/coaching purposes and should not be distributed outside this specific use.
- Media images – these are images taken by an individual from the media, i.e. TV, newspaper, social media or professional photographer where the images are to be used for publicity or promotion of the event or future events.
- Administration images – these are images taken for general administration purposes; including images used for membership cards, competition entries and could also include images that form part of an archive record.

Use of images on social media

Where images of young people are used on social media the person responsible for posting an image must be aware of the potential for an image to be used inappropriately. The following safeguards must be in place to protect young people:

- Personal details of a young person should not be included.
- Captions should be in keeping with the sport represented.
- The posting and any purpose should not breach the codes of conduct.
- The type of image should not breach guidance in this policy.

Storage of Images

Storage includes any image stored as a hard copy and/or electronically as a soft copy. This includes images on social media, photographic archives, individual personal databases e.g. personal cameras, phones, etc. How personal images are stored is the responsibility of parents/guardians with their child/young person.

All other images should only be stored for defined and intended purposes e.g. membership, promotion, and/or archiving.

- If storage of images is required the images must only be stored for the length of time for which they are needed
- If possible, avoid using the names of children, or any other identifying feature

Once images are no longer required they must be properly destroyed. Digital images stored on computer systems need to be fully deleted, including deletion from the cache memory and/or temporary files.

Inappropriate Images

Taking inappropriate images

If there is any concern about the nature of any image taken this should be reported to the responsible person (in the club or event/activity) who will refer to the statutory authorities. The concerned individual may also report their concern directly to the statutory authorities. The contact details for the statutory authority can be found in the sports clubs/ organisations Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.

Non-authorized taking of images

If you are concerned about an individual taking images at an event this should be verbally reported to the relevant responsible person. It may be necessary to report the non-authorized taking of images to the appropriate statutory authorities.

The responsible person will identify the person and check if their device is registered for the event. If not registered, the person must be asked to register their device, with appropriate identification. If the person is not willing to register their device they should be asked to leave.

Where the event is open to the public e.g. where only part of the facility is being used, it will be necessary to report non-authorized taking of images to the facility manager.

Inappropriate use of images

Where there is a concern about the use of images this should be reported to the responsible person who will take appropriate action. This will include reporting the alleged use to:

- The parent/carer of any young person involved.
- The person responsible for posting the image.
- The media platform i.e. twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, print media etc.
- The statutory authorities.

Inappropriate use of images is a breach of this guidance and the code of conduct and may result in a complaint/ disciplinary procedure against those involved in tennis. Where there is a concern about the publication of an image in local or national newspapers you should contact the individual newspaper or the Press Council of Ireland and the Office of the Press Ombudsman – website <http://www.presscouncil.ie/>

Installation and use of CCTV (Closed Circuit Television)

The use of CCTV is a positive step in safeguarding those that use facilities. It is important that clubs using a facility are aware of blind spots (potential risk areas), who has access, the use of images and the facility procedure for dealing with incidents or misbehaviour. The information regarding the presence of CCTV within a facility should be available to members and/or parents/guardians.

A club should have a copy of the facility's policy regarding the use of CCTV, usually as part of a club/facility agreement. Queries regarding the use of CCTV are a matter for the facility or the operating company. Any queries from members should be directed through the club as the club has the agreement with the facility.

The following information should be noted:

- Who in the facility has day to day responsibility for the system and operation of the CCTV.
- The number of cameras located in the specified areas.
- Are spectator areas covered (i.e. can someone misbehaving in this area or regularly turning up for less than innocent viewing purposes be monitored).
- Identify areas of the facility that cannot be monitored – if these areas are easily identified by anyone with intent it would be important to know in order to be extra vigilant.
- Who, during sessions, is responsible for monitoring the cameras and what is the policy for dealing with any perceived misconduct or incidents viewed at the time.
- Who has access to the password protected files.

CCTV does not replace vigilance and proper supervision for training sessions and activities as required by (*Organisation Name*).

Social Media

In all their contacts and communications with the members of their organisation/group, leaders must be seen to be open and transparent. This is the case whether communications are by traditional means or by electronic means.

NB: Leaders must not communicate with children or young people via leader's personal social networking profiles, email accounts, or chat rooms.

For an Organisation/Club Using/Publishing a Social Network the following principals should be applied:

- The page/profile must be password-protected, and the password must be held by at least three leaders of the organisation.
- The site should be monitored by a designated supervisor. This person should have access to the login details of the site. This supervisor will be appointed by the Designated Person/Safeguarding Panel in charge of Child Protection.
- Any inappropriate posts by children/young people or leaders should be removed by the designated supervisor. Reasons should then be explained to the person who posted the content. Where possible sites should be monitored before content is put up.
- The site should be kept 'Private' i.e. only permitted members or 'friends' can see what is posted on the site.
- The use of personal addresses and telephone numbers etc., should be avoided as, while sites are 'private', there is the potential for items to be copied and shared.
- Content of any postings should be consistent with the aims of the organisation. In cases of doubt leaders should seek advice.

For Leaders Using a Social Networking Site

- Leaders should not 'friend' or 'follow' children or young people on social media. (Children or young people may 'follow' leaders on social media so leaders should make sure any content they post is appropriate.)
- Messages left to or from children or young people on social network sites should be written on an open page (e.g. A facebook 'Wall') and not in a private message or by using 'chat' [one-on-one].
- Leaders should not network with members of their organisation/group via closed [one-on-one] chats e.g. facebook messenger, WhatsApp, etc,. This should be done only through 'Group Chat.'
- Any events or activities run by the organisation that are organised or publicised on the site should be a closed event so as non-members cannot access the event without suitable permission by the site administrators.
- Any emails sent to children or young people via the site must be sent to at least one other leader. (This can be done by 'bcc' if necessary.)
- Leaders should avoid communicating with children or young people in their organisation/group via email late at night.

- In signing off a post or email leaders should not do so in a way that could be misconstrued or misinterpreted by the recipient, e.g. “Luv X”; “xoxoxo”. Simply sign your name.
- Parents/carers should be asked to give their approval for leaders to communicate with their children/young people via social networking sites, or by any other means of internet communications (e.g. email).
- Parental and child’s permission is required before pictures or videos of children or young people are posted online.
- Any disclosures of abuses reported through a social networking site must be dealt with according to your reporting procedures.

Use of Mobile Phones

Those whose work with children and young people need to be aware of the opportunities for abuse through the misuse of mobile phones and text messaging. While good use of such media can be beneficial we must be vigilant and alert to the possibilities of misuse and consequent harm that can result to young people. Leaders must also take care to protect the children in their care and themselves.

- Leaders involved in sport should only have children’s and young people’s mobile numbers if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text them
- Parental permission should be sought if the leader in this role will be contacting children or young people via mobile phone.
- A method of accountability should be arranged e.g. copies of texts could also be sent to the administrator or to parents.
- If a leader had a child/young person’s phone number it should only be used for the purposes it has been given, i.e., the leader should not share this information.
- It is recommended that if a leader is an employee of your organisation/club should have a separate phone for work purposes rather than using their personal phone for contacting children and young people.

Texting – Communication not Conversation!

- Texts should be used for the purposes of reminding children or young people about events which are forthcoming.
- Texts can also be used as a means to encourage children or young people if it is appropriate it, e.g., ‘Hope exam goes ok.’
- If it turns into a conversation, communications should be ended. A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next event or, if they are concerned about the child/ young person, arrange to meet up to talk further (within the usual child protection parameters).

Smart Phones

Smart phones should be used safely and responsibly.

Pictures can be very powerful and stir up strong emotions. Smart phone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy.

Leaders and children/young people should not send pictures that are obscene, indecent, or menacing and should be sensitive about other people's gender identity, sexual identity, racial heritage, religion, or personal background. Both leaders and children/young people should be made aware that it is a criminal offence to take, make, and permit to be taken, distribute, show, or possess an indecent or sexually explicit image of a child under 18.

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity the leader in charge should ensure they are clear about expectations of them in relation to child protection. Professional photographers/film/video operators wishing to record an activity should seek accreditation from leaders by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded.

The leader should then:

- Provide a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Issue the photographer with identification which should be worn at all times.
- Keep a record of accreditations.
- Inform leaders, children/young people, and parents, that a photographer will be in attendance is at the activity and check that they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Not allow unsupervised access to children/young people or one-to-one photo sessions.
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the activity or at a child/young person's home.
- Anyone concerned about any photography taking place should discuss his or her concerns with the children's officer.

Smart phones can be used to make children/young people safer. Older children, for example, using a taxi can send a picture of the car's registration to a friend before they begin the trip, or can simply use the phone to show parents where they are.

- Children/young people can only be photographed when permission has been provided in writing from their parent/ guardian and child.
- The scope of the use of photographs must also be stated as part of the parental permission.

- Children/young people should not be named individually in photographs unless necessary and with clear agreement and consent of parents and child, for example, if the child/young person concerned was winning a prize worthy of publication.
- When posting photographs on social media settings should be such that children/young people cannot be individually tagged.
- All photographs must be stored in a secure place either electronically in a password protected file or physically in a locked cabinet.
- If any electronic device/memory which contains photographs is disposed of or passed on, then the device must be wiped of all photographs in such a way that they cannot be recovered on that device.

Use of Mobile phones during activities

Groups should, with parents and children/young people, develop a policy on the use of mobile phones during youth activities. This policy should be communicated to all parents and youth members. This guidance could include:

- Confirmation that when on activities a named leader is the primary point of communication and is to be contacted if there is an emergency or change to previously agreed arrangements.
- That the usage of smart phones including text messaging or playing games cannot be allowed to be a distraction from a safe awareness of the environment or be allowed to interfere with full participation in the activity.
- That when on camps or overnight activities, there is a stated preferred time period when parents may make contact, if they wish? Parents should be advised that contact outside of this time may not be possible due to activities.
- Consider that use of smart phones while away can worsen rather than alleviate homesickness. In this context it can be good to encourage children/young people to consider that ‘no news is good news.’

Use of Computers/Tablets/Web-enabled Games Consoles/Smart TVs

If such devices are used as part of activities within the organisation, guidelines should be produced to ensure that they are used for the correct purpose, and include, for example, what websites are suitable for the age of children/ young people that the leaders are worth with.

Internet Safety

The Office for Internet Safety Department of Justice and Equality 51 St. Stephen’s Green
Dublin 2 Ph: (01) 602 8258 Email: internetsafety@justice.ie www.internetsafety.ie

Physical Contact

Physical contact during sport should always be intended to meet the child's needs, NOT the adult's. Appropriate physical contact may be required to assist in the development of a skill or activity or for safety reasons e.g. to prevent or treat an injury. This should be in an open environment with the permission and understanding of the participant.

When is physical contact appropriate in Tennis?

Contact should be determined by the age and developmental stage of the participant - Don't do something that a child can do for themselves. Physical contact between adults and children in sport should take place only when necessary to:

- *Develop tennis skills or techniques.*
- *Treat an injury.*
- *Prevent an injury or accident from occurring.*
- *Meet the requirements of the sport.*
- *Comfort a distressed child or to celebrate their success.*

What are good principles to follow?

- Physical contact should take place in the interests of and for the benefit of the child, rather than the adult involved.
- Adults should explain the nature of and reason for the physical contact to the child.
- Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission, for example to aid the demonstration a specific tennis technique.
- Sports clubs and coaches should provide an induction for new young members and their parents/carers that cover guidance about any physical contact that will be required as part of that activity. The reasons for the physical contact and the nature of the physical contact should be explained and agreed.
- Children should be encouraged to voice concerns they have if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.
- Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.
- Well intentioned gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to the possibility of questions being raised by observers. As a general principle adults in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. Resistance from a child should be respected

What about children who need specific assistance due to disability or injury?

In the case of a young person with a disability specific support or assistance may be required. The following guidelines should be followed:

- Efforts should be made to receive as much information as possible on the child to ensure safe inclusion of him/her. There should be clear agreements on what is required.
- Parents/carers or their delegated care providers should be asked to undertake all intimate or personal care tasks for their child. This is not an appropriate role for coaches and others involved in leading activities.
- When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, they should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting.
- It is recommended that those assisting receive appropriate training in order to minimise the risk of injury both to themselves and the child.

What about physical punishment?

Any form of physical punishment is unlawful in all circumstances. It is a criminal offence and should be reported to AGS and Tusla

What about direct contact in coaching?

Some sport or physical activities are more likely to require coaches or teachers to come into physical contact with children and young people from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples include teaching a pupil how to use a piece of apparatus or equipment or demonstrating a move or exercise during a coaching or teaching session in order to reduce the risk of injury due to falls or errors when performing. Adults should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted. Over handling at all times should be avoided.

Is it ok to comfort a child or celebrate success?

There may be occasions where a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. A young person may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Adults should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present) normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. Contact that an adult may feel is appropriate may be unwanted or uncomfortable to a young person. Adults should always meet the needs of the child, be age appropriate and respect resistance.

Where do specific sports science and medical roles fit in?

There may be some roles within sport or physical activities where physical contact is a requirement of the role, particularly sports science or medicine. These tasks should only be undertaken by properly trained or qualified practitioners. This guidance does not seek to replace the specific guidance and codes of practice developed for those professionals and reference should be made to the appropriate body for that discipline.

Bullying

What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined by the Department of Education and Skills guidelines as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

All forms of bullying will be addressed.

Everybody in the club/organisation has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.

Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour.

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc...
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals.
- Posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites.
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism, sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour.
- Unwanted physical contact.

Children with a disability, from ethnic minorities, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and are more likely to be targeted.

The club or organisation will:

- Recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all participants from harm.
- Promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Seek to ensure that bullying behaviour is not accepted or condoned.
- Require all members of the club/organisation to be given information about, and sign up to, this policy.
- Take action to investigate and respond to any alleged incidents of bullying.
- Encourage and facilitate children and young people to play an active part in developing and adopting a code of conduct to address bullying.
- Ensure that coaches are given access to information, guidance and/or training on bullying.

Each participant, coach, volunteer or official will:

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings and views of others.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special and should be valued.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Be committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt and collective action to deal with it.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see.
- Report incidents of bullying they see to the club children's officer – by doing nothing you are condoning bullying.

Support to the child:

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them.
- Potential barriers to talking (including those associated with a child's disability or impairment) need to be identified and addressed at the outset to enable children to approach adults for help.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.
- Sanctions for those bullying others that involves long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, will be avoided.

Support to the parents/guardians:

- Parents/guardians should be advised on the organisation/ club's bullying policy and practice.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/carers.
- Parents will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available.
- Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

Useful Contacts:

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC): www.ispcc.ie/shield

Anti-Bullying Centre DCU: www4.dcu.ie/abc/index.shtml

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Sticks and Stones: 087 9015199 or www.sticksandstones.ie

ChildLine UK: 0800 11 11 / www.childline.org.uk

ChildLine Republic of Ireland: 1800 66 66 66 or Text Talk to 50101, www.childline.ie

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum: www.niabf.org.uk

Kidscape: www.kidscape.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Alliance: www.antibullyingalliance.org

Facilities

Introduction

Clubs, facilities and those with responsibility for children and young people have a general duty of care towards them. However there are no specific legal requirements regarding the use of changing facilities. This document is therefore intended as practice guidance to support individuals and organisations to consider issues relevant to their particular context; and to develop and implement policies and procedures that provide a safe environment for children and young people.

Facility Policy

This guidance may assist in the review and updating of existing policies and procedures to support improvements in safeguarding and to develop a safer environment. The following aspects should be taken into account when accessing facilities:

- Type of Facility.
- Adults using the changing rooms at the same time as children.
- Supervision.
- Who should supervise?
- Parents as Supervisors.
- Unsupervised children in sport or leisure facilities.
- Parents' (or carers') responsibilities.
- Facility Operators Responsibilities.
- Mixed Gender Teams

Supervision in the changing facility may also be necessary when:

- Children are too young to be left alone or change themselves. Organisers of groups of children under eight years should make arrangements for their supervision while changing before and after the activity. Although most children of school age (four years old) may be capable of changing their clothes, many leisure facilities have established guidelines that any child below the age of eight years must be accompanied.
- The group includes disabled children who require additional support and assistance with changing (note this should be undertaken by prior agreement with their parent or professional carer)
- Children could injure themselves or access a potential risk in a club that is unattended
- There are concerns about bullying, fighting or other troublesome behaviours taking place which need to be managed.

Who should supervise?

If the club have decided that the children and young people need supervision, staff/volunteers should consider who will carry this out. This task provides access to children in circumstances of increased vulnerability and therefore careful consideration should be given to ensuring that those undertaking this task have been assessed as being suitable to do so.

- Numbers - organisers are recommended to have more than one adult supervising, as this will ensure cover in the event of an accident or incident occurring or if one supervisor is called away.
- Gender - it is considered good practice to ensure that children are supervised by staff/volunteers of the same gender while changing.
- Timings - by agreeing a very clear timetable for use of the changing facilities by children, the supervising adults and any coaches or officials respectively, the risks associated to any extended contact between the adults and children are minimised.
- Carry out safe recruitment practices.

Facility Operators Responsibilities:

When children are given access to facilities, operators assume a duty of care for them. The level of responsibility will vary depending on:

- If the child is alone and unsupervised
- With parent/ carer/s.
- Attending an activity.
- Attending an activity staffed by the facility.
- Attending a school group or club.
- Attending a public session.

Operators have a responsibility to put in place appropriate safeguarding arrangements which include promoting and implementing a policy for admitting unaccompanied children. This information should be provided to parents and other users informing them about the facility's policy regarding unaccompanied children using the facility, and any rules about the supervision of young children within the facility (particularly in changing/ shower areas where potential safeguarding risks are increased).

Many facilities currently use the age of eight as a guide. In practice, while facilities need to be able to establish a lower threshold for admission that is practical to operate, identifying an age for this purpose is difficult given variations in children's physical, psychological and emotional development.

While the facility may set the lower age limit, it is for parents (who know most about their children and have primary responsibility for their welfare) to judge if their child needs to be accompanied even if older than this limit.

Tennis Coaches

Tennis Coaches play a vital role in children's tennis. Tennis Ireland, the Branches, the Clubs and other Stakeholders, should ensure that the work of Coaches, is guided by this safeguarding guidance and best practice whilst also recognising that they are entitled to obtain a healthy sense of achievement and satisfaction through their involvement in children's tennis.

It is strongly recommended that all our stakeholders use Tennis Ireland Licensed Coaches only.