

SIFSC Child Protection Policy (based on NISA template)

INTRODUCTION

As volunteers or employees in ice skating we will all come into contact with young people who are vulnerable to abuse. This abuse may occur within the sport or in other environments, and perpetrators could include parents, carer's, professionals or other young people.

SIFSC has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in Ice skating from harm and will aim to fulfil this duty by the adherence to the policies and procedures detailed within this document.

SIFSC will support anyone who reports, in good faith, any concern for the welfare of a young person. Where an allegation is made against a member of club personnel, it may be in the best interests of all parties to suspend that individual from involvement in club sessions, and that rink management should be informed, to allow them to make their own decision.

Definitions: For the purposes of this document the term 'young person/people' will be used to refer to participants of Ice skating who are aged under 18. The term 'parent/carer' will be used to represent anyone who has caring responsibilities for the child. The term 'club personnel' will refer to volunteers, staff, and coaches working with young people.

CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE

Abuse is typically described by the use of four categories: physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect. It is important to remember, however, that these types of abuse are not mutually exclusive, and also that the examples given are not exhaustive.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a young person's physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the impairment of their health or development. It can include the failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failing to protect them from danger or harm, or failure to access appropriate medical care.

Sexual harm: Forcing, enticing or inciting a young person to take part in any sexual activity, whether or not this involves direct sexual contact. This could include direct sexual activity, but also acts such as showing pornographic material to children.

Physical harm: May include acts such as hitting, slapping, burning, shaking or suffocating the victim. It can also involve a parent fabricating or inducing illness in a young person. Forcing a young person in sport to train beyond their capabilities could also constitute physical harm.

Emotional Harm: Can include causing a young person to feel worthless, unloved, afraid or important only if they meet another person's needs. It can involve over-protection, prevention from normal social interaction, or exposure to the ill-treatment of others. Within sport emotional harm may occur where the expectations of parents or coaches are unrealistic and the young person is consistently unable to meet them.

INDICATORS OF ABUSE

The indicators detailed here are to assist with the assessment of a child, and the decision as to whether to take further action arising from any concerns. The presence of one or more does not constitute proof that abuse is occurring and must be considered in the context of the child's social and medical background.

Physical harm:

Most children will suffer cuts and bruises are part of their normal life, and injuries must be viewed in the wider context of the child's medical and social history, stage of development, and the explanation given for the injury. Most accidental bruises will be seen on the 'bony' parts of the body, e.g. elbows, knees, shins, and will usually be on the front of the body. Injuries to the 'soft' parts of the body, such as cheeks, abdomen, buttocks, back and thighs are less likely to be accidental

Signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks, or injuries on any part of the body
- Multiple bruises in clusters, particularly on the upper arm or outside of the thigh
- Burns, including cigarette burns and scalds
- Human bite marks
- Broken bones.

Changes in behaviour which may indicate physical abuse include:

- Fear of parents being asked for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or temper outbursts
- Reluctance to be touched or approached
- Reluctance to get changed in sight of others
- Depression or withdrawn presentation
- Running away from home.

Changes in behaviour indicative of emotional abuse may include:

- Neurotic behaviour, e.g. hair twisting, rocking etc.
- Inability to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Sudden speech disorder
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached about their behaviour.
- Developmental delay.

Sexual harm:

- Physical signs of sexual abuse may include:
- Pain, itching, bruising, bleeding, discharge or infection in genital area
- Sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy
- Discomfort when walking or sitting
- Stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which might be indicative of sexual abuse could include:

- Sudden and unexplained changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group.
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge inconsistent with age or developmental level
- Sexualised behaviour, language or drawings
- Self harm or eating disorders
- Bedwetting
- Substance misuse
- Unexplained source of money

Physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, theft of food from other children
- Always being dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being always underweight
- Weather / season/ activity inappropriate clothing
- Changes in behaviour which might be indicative of neglect could include:
- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Having few friends / reluctance to invite friends to the home
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Young people with disabilities can be at increased risk of becoming victims of abuse for a number of reasons, including; the potential for an increased number of people being involved in their personal care; that they may have communication difficulties which make it more difficult for them to disclose what is happening to them; that their disability might be used as an explanation for injuries, frequent absence through illness, changes in behaviour etc.

GOOD PRACTICE WITHIN SPORTING ACTIVITIES

It is the responsibility of the club to ensure that all club personnel have been appropriately checked through the Criminal Records Bureau and that this is updated at relevant intervals. The club has a designated Child Protection Officer who will take responsibility for checks on other club personnel, and will be the point of

contact for peoples' concerns and recording of any incidents.

Adults are advised to take all possible steps to avoid situations which may give rise to suspicions or allegations. This will generally involve working in pairs wherever possible, and ensuring that parents/carers are present to undertake any personal care (such as dressing that the young person needs. Parents will ideally remain present throughout all activities.

In the case of an away competition or event, young people should be accompanied by parents if at all possible. Otherwise they should be supervised at all times by a person (eg their coach) who has a full CRB clearance, and full emergency contact details supplied; medical details of the young person should be on file, and the parent should have signed a consent form. All mixed gender activities should be attended by mixed gender club officials. At no time should adults and children share changing or showering facilities during organised activities.

Club personnel should ensure that their behaviour sets a good example to young people and that they treat all participants equally and with respect and dignity. The welfare of the young person should always be prioritised above sporting success. Feedback given to young people should always be constructive, rather than negative.

Photographing or filming of participants should be carried out in line with the policy operated by the home venue. Clubs should seek written consent of parents before any images of young people are published. It is known that some individuals will use sporting events or venues in order to take photographs or footage of young people and all personnel should be vigilant in this respect and report any concerns to venue staff.

RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

All club personnel should be required to complete an application form which will include their current contact details, recent addresses, other identities and a self-disclosure about any criminal record. If the volunteer has been in the club (or accompanied their child at the club) for less than 1 year arrangements should be made to obtain information from the Criminal Records Bureau.

New club personnel should receive induction in which they are made aware of the NISA and club Codes of Conduct and Child Protection Policies and Procedure and any training needs are identified.

HOW TO DEAL WITH SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

If a child is in immediate danger any disclosure should be reported to the Police and Social Services. Any disclosure of abuse made by a young person should be reported to the club's Child Protection Officer, to the rink and to the relevant Social Services Department either immediately in the event of any current danger, or within 24 hours if the disclosure is of something which has taken place in the past but is not ongoing.

The club's designated Child Protection Officer should be contacted to discuss any concerns which are not linked to a disclosure. A decision can then be taken on whether the suspicion should be further reported to Social Services or Police.

All reports made to Social Services or Police and any allegations concerning misconduct by club personnel should be reported to the NISA Child Protection Officer if either the club or the person concerned is a member.

Club personnel may feel uncomfortable about reporting concerns, fearful of causing dispute with parents/carers, or concerned that the child may be taken into care. These concerns must always be recognised as reasonable but are not reasons to withhold information from the relevant authorities or for delay in reporting concerns.

If the suspicion arises from concerns about the young person's appearance or behaviour it may be appropriate to make enquiries with the parent or carer and then to make a further judgement based on any explanation which is offered.

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times, and information kept secure and disseminated only to those with a need to know.

WHAT TO DO IF ABUSE IS DISCLOSED

- Remain calm
- Don't make promises to keep the information secret or in confidence. The young person must be aware that you will have to pass the information on.
- Reassure the young person that they have done the right thing in making the disclosure.

- Record what is said, but do not probe for further details. This could jeopardise any future investigation and/or prosecution of the perpetrator. Transfer the information to the NISA Incident Reporting Form as soon as possible, and pass this to the club's Child Protection Officer.
- Inform the young person of what you will do next and who else will be informed.
- Contact Police / Social Services immediately if the child is in ongoing danger. Contact the Child Protection Officer and make a report within 24 hours if there is no ongoing danger.
- Under no circumstances should the alleged abuser be challenged or informed of the disclosure. This could place the young person in further danger.

PHOTOGRAPHY

- Anyone taking photographs or videos at a club session must have approval from the club's on-duty supervisor; their name and the skaters being photographed must be noted in the attendance log. The approval of the subject must be sought unless it is a parent filming or photographing their own child.
- The taking of photographs for commercial use / reproduction / social media is prohibited unless with the written consent of the on-duty supervisor and all skaters being photographed, including coaches. A skater may upload their own photo (taken on club ice) to social media, but any others included in the photo must also register their approval on the attendance log.
- Individual skaters may be filmed for training purposes subject to the conditions listed here. As far as possible the camera should be trained on the subject. Where a static wide-angle camera is used its operator must assure the supervisor that the recording will not be reproduced or transmitted beyond the camera, its dedicated monitor, or the subject skater's own equipment