

Children and their rights

1

Children have the right to be safe, respected, and to express any worries they may have;

2

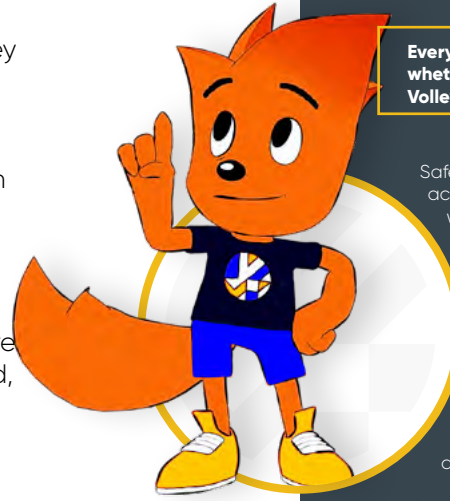
No one should harm or hurt them; children must be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, and neglect;

3

Children have the right to report if they are harmed, to speak their minds, to be heard, and to be taken seriously;

4

They have the right to be treated without discrimination;



What is Safeguarding

Every child has the right to be safe, whether at home, school, or on the Volleyball court.

Safeguarding involves taking reasonable actions to protect and promote a child's welfare in all situations. It requires clear guidelines for collaboration between organisations and individuals, ensuring shared responsibility for protecting young participants in sports.

This guide defines these responsibilities and highlights the roles of relevant agencies in identifying and addressing potential abuse or harm.

It is the duty of every coach, teacher, and adult to prioritize the safety and well-being of all children, taking appropriate action when needed.

Guardians of the Court

A Quick Guide to Safeguarding Children in Volleyball

Children thrive in environments that are safe, supportive, and nurturing.

In volleyball, safeguarding ensures that every child feels secure, valued, and protected. A positive sports culture fosters trust, promotes teamwork, and supports lifelong development.



Our Goal

To make Volleyball a safe space where young athletes can grow and thrive, free from abuse and harm.



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5

Their best interests should be prioritised when decisions are made about them;

6

If they are hurt, adults must do everything possible to protect them from violence and uphold their rights;

7

Children are never alone in facing violence;

8

They are encouraged to share, seek help, and ask questions.

How to Use the Guide ?

The Guide to Safeguarding Children in Volleyball and Beyond helps prevent violence against children and addresses safety concerns in various contexts:

- At school, home, or on the court
- In physical and health education classes
- Within sport clubs, both in and out of schools
- In cases of suspected or confirmed violence
- While creating or promoting rules for schools
- and sport clubs
- When preparing child protection policies
- During training sessions for sport staff
- In workshops and discussions with parents to enhance their understanding of child protection.

Who is the Guide For ?

- Sport coaches and junior trainers
- Physical and health education teachers
- Teachers with or without a sport background
- Other sport personnel working with children; Indirect beneficiaries include parents and other school staff, who also play a role in ensuring a safe environment for children.

STOP BULLYING!

Child Safety Principles

Children have the right to live, play, and learn in a safe environment, free from abuse, neglect, and violence. Ensuring their safety in every aspect of their lives, especially in sport, is crucial.

Here are the **10 Guiding Principles** for protecting children from abuse and violence



1 Child Well-being

The well-being of children is the top priority in all activities involving them.

2 Respect for Rights and Dignity

Every child deserves respect for their rights, dignity, and worth, regardless of their age, culture, ability, gender, race, language, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, or social status.

3 Addressing Abuse

All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be taken seriously and addressed promptly and appropriately.

4 Creating a Safe Environment

Volleyball facilities must be safe, with proper supervision, maintenance, and processes to protect children from harm and injuries.

5 Adult Supervision

Responsible adults must supervise children, especially in potentially dangerous situations, to prevent harm.

6 Professional Training

Every child deserves respect for their rights, dignity, and worth, regardless of their age, culture, ability, gender, race, language, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, or social status.

7 Protection Procedures and Policies

Coaches, physical education teachers, and other sport personnel must receive training to recognise, prevent, and address violence in Volleyball effectively.

8 Awareness of Safe Sport

- A. Educate all stakeholders—coaches, staff, children, and parents—about the difference between healthy competition and violence
- B. Promote programs that foster safety and protection across sports and other life spheres.

9 Support for Victims

Provide psychological, legal, and other assistance to children who have been victims of violence in sport.

10 Intersectoral Cooperation and Coordination

Encourage collaboration between public institutions, associations, schools, the media, and communities to combat violence in Volleyball.



Recognising and Preventing Abuse

Children may face abuse in settings such as families, institutions, communities, sport environments, or online. They could be harmed by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Neglect

Neglect happens when a child's basic needs, such as food, clothing, healthcare, education, or a safe environment, are not met. It can lead to serious harm to their physical, mental, and emotional development.

Neglect is the most common form of child abuse and includes situations where a child lacks proper supervision, medical care, or protection from harm. to serious harm to their physical, mental, and emotional development. Neglect is the most common form of child abuse and includes situations where a child lacks proper supervision, medical care, or protection from harm.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves intentionally causing physical harm to a child. **This includes actions like hitting, shaking, burning, or biting.**

It can also occur when someone deliberately causes illness or fabricates symptoms in a child. Injuries like rib fractures are often a sign of physical abuse.



Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse includes behaviours that harm a child's mental well-being and self-esteem. **This may involve verbal insults, humiliation, bullying (both in-person and online), threats, or acts that frighten or intimidate the child.** Restricting their freedom or engaging in degrading or discriminatory behaviours can also be forms of emotional abuse, potentially leading to long-term psychological harm.



Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse happens when a child is involved in sexual activities they do not understand, cannot consent to, or are forced to engage in. This includes acts like rape, inappropriate touching, or making a child view or produce sexual images. **Non-penetrative acts, such as kissing or rubbing, are also forms of sexual abuse.**

Signs to Watch For:



- Behavioural changes
- Withdrawal
- Aggression
- Fear of adults

Always report suspicions to the proper authorities.

All activities related to child safety must uphold the highest ethical standards, respecting human dignity, highest ethical standards, respecting human dignity, justice, non-discrimination, equality, accountability, and fairness. By adhering to these principles, we create an environment where children can thrive, free from harm, while enjoying the benefits of sport.

Intervention and Prevention

Addressing the complex issue of child victims of abuse, perpetrators of violence and supporting children who witness violence requires tailored approaches that recognise the unique vulnerabilities of both boys and girls in Volleyball. By focusing on family dynamics, school environments, peer relationships, and therapeutic interventions, participating schools and clubs can significantly reduce the incidence of violence and provide the necessary support for affected children.



Level of Action:

- Mild:** Address minor incidents directly and promptly.
- Moderate:** Report to the club and involve a protection team.
- Severe:** Contact external authorities for immediate intervention.

Addressing Child Perpetrators of Violence

A Multifaceted Approach

Family Interventions:

- Implement programmes that educate parents on positive parenting practices.
- Provide support to families experiencing violence to reduce risk factors for children.

School-Based Programmes:

- Introduce and enforce anti-bullying initiatives.
- Offer mental health services within schools.
- Foster a positive, inclusive school climate.

Peer Support:

- Encourage healthy peer relationships.
- Implement mentoring and peer mediation programmes to promote positive social interactions.

Therapeutic Interventions:

- Provide professional counselling and behavioural therapy.
- Help children learn non-violent ways to express emotions and resolve conflicts.

Supporting Children Who Witness Violence

A Comprehensive Support System

Therapeutic Interventions:

- Offer counselling and trauma-focused therapies to help children process their experiences.
- Develop healthy coping mechanisms to address the impact of witnessing violence.

Family Support Programmes:

- Implement interventions that support the entire family, including parenting and family therapy.

School-Based Programmes:

- Create safe spaces in schools with access to supportive counselling.
- Teach social-emotional skills to help children manage their experiences.

Community Resources:

- Ensure access to community resources for teachers, coaches, and other leaders to assist children and families affected by violence.

Prevention Strategies:

- Built trust with children and families.
- Conduct training for staff and volunteers.
- Promote open communication about safety.

Responding to a Child's Disclosure of Abuse or Neglect

- **Find a quiet place**
Listen to the child in a peaceful, private space.
- **Listen calmly and non-judgmentally**
Focus on understanding rather than questioning or doubting.
- **Do not force information**
Avoid pressuring the child to provide details or making promises of complete confidentiality.
- **Reassure the child**
Explain that what happened is not their fault.
- **Allow uninterrupted sharing**
Let the child recount events without interruption.
- **Respect the child's feelings**
Acknowledge and validate their emotions.
- **Offer support**
Inform the Child that you will try to help but may need to involve other services if necessary.
- **Keep information secure**
Maintain confidentiality and ensure notes are handed over to the Protection Team or relevant authorities.



Creating Safety Rules for Children and Staff in the Sport

What to do ?

To ensure the safety and protection of both children and employees within the sport club, it is crucial to establish clear, **written rules** as part of the club's official programme. These rules should cover all aspects of sport life to ensure everyone involved in the club is familiar with and adheres to them.

The key areas to address include:

1

Club Membership and Registration

- A. Clearly define the process for registering within the sport club.
- B. Outline the rights and responsibilities of children, parents, and sport staff.
- C. Establish procedures for leaving the club and handling club transfers.

2

Protection of Facilities

Implement rules for the safe use of sport facilities, changing rooms, and other spaces where children spend time.

3

Travel and Accommodation

Set guidelines for stays outside the city/state, including travel, transportation, and overnight accommodations.

4

Adult Supervision

Establish guidelines for adult supervision, particularly regarding proximity to children's personal space.

5

Recording and Photography

Define rules and obligations related to recording and photography of children during sport activities.

6

Social Media Policies

Implement policies for social media usage, including guidelines for contact, and publication of content related to sport activities.

7

Mobile Phone Use

Create guidelines for the appropriate use of mobile phones by children and staff.

8

Reporting Procedures

Establish clear procedures for reporting accidents, incidents, and injuries.

9

Abuse and Violence Protocols

Develop protocols for addressing abuse and violence, including reporting procedures and follow-up actions.

Remember !

Safeguarding is a Team Effort

Together, we can create a Volleyball community where every child feels safe, supported, and empowered.



What not to do !

To create a safe and supportive environment for child victims in the sport club, it is essential to avoid the following practices:

- Do not assume parental or guardian responsibilities.
- Do not spend time alone with children out of sight of others.
- Do not enter the homes of children without proper authorisation from parents or guardians.
- Do not involve children in rough, physical, or provocative games or activities.
- Do not engage in any form of inappropriate touching or gestures.
- Do not make sexually suggestive comments to children, even as a joke.
- Do not belittle or ridicule children for their comments or actions.
- Do not offer advice or guidance beyond your expertise or designated role.
- Do not refrain from reporting serious incidents or informing parents about severe cases (third level incidents).
- Do not take inappropriate photos or recordings of children during sport events, especially those with disabilities or in vulnerable positions.
- Do not record videos for coaching purposes during training without obtaining parental consent.
- Do not neglect to ensure that all volunteers and staff are aware of and adhere to the sport club's rules and responsibilities towards children.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Sports Personnel Must:

- Act as role models and mentors.
- Report suspicions of abuse immediately.
- Create a positive environment focused on respect and inclusivity.
- Adhere to safeguarding policies and protocols.

Establishing a Child Protection Team:

A dedicated Child Protection Team ensures:

- Quick response to reports of abuse.
- Support for victims and families.
- Coordination with external organisations (police, healthcare).

Team Members: Club doctor, psychologist, and sport associates.