

SAFEGUARDING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

An international Learning Document
created in partnership with Croatia,
Germany, Spain, and Wales.



Erasmus+

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Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales
Clybiau Bechgyn a Merched Cymru



WELCOME MESSAGE

The Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Wales is delighted to have produced this resource with our partners - Escolapia Salt (Spain), Sprotkreisjungend Rems-murr (Germany) and Hermes (Croatia).

The safeguarding of young people is paramount for us at the Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Wales and for all the organisations who have been involved in this "Safeguarding Our Young People" project. This resource is the culmination of two years of working together and learning from each other with workshops taking place in all four countries.

I would like to thank every person who has had an involvement during the lifetime of this project and I hope that this resource will be something that will be utilised for years to come in each of the four countries represented.



Grant Poiner

Chief Executive Officer



Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales

Clybiau Bechgyn a Merched Cymru



Some of the necessary objectives to be a welcoming and safe school that ensures the dignity, integrity and happiness of its students are to:

1. Put the students at the centre of school life.
2. Establish respectful relationships between adults and students.
3. Establish spaces of trust between members of the educational community (students, teachers and families).
4. Act professionally in situations of conflict, harassment, abuse or negligence.

INTRODUCTION

The Pia Salt School is a highly complex and newly created centre. It is located in the municipality of Salt where the density of immigration and poverty is the highest in Catalonia.

Working in the educational field, our school has the mission of transforming its social context by promoting positive coexistence between students who are native and those who have recently arrived in the municipality. In this way, we aim to promote tolerance of cultural and ethnic diversity.

Faced with the diverse reality we live in, we have to be attentive to the vulnerability of some of our students and families while functioning as an open and sensitive educational project.

To achieve this, we need to work together across different areas with an open and welcoming outlook. Also, we need to understand the risk factors and types of abuse.



TEACHER TRAINING

School staff (administrators, teachers, support staff/monitors, and school volunteers) should receive training to attend to their own emotional needs and those of their students.

To be able to carry out good preventative activities and to act in response to situations of risk or negligence, we suggest three blocks of training:

1. Emotional education: By emotional education, we mean learning about the recognition of emotions, how to manage them and which tools will help to empower staff to respond in situations of abuse, mistreatment or neglect.

2. Conflict resolution: The resolution of conflicts is fundamental to supporting students in such a way that they have the confidence to share any problems in their lives with staff. In addition, training should give staff key tools to enable them to proactively resolve day-to-day classroom conflicts, thus preventing cases of harassment and abuse.

3. Specific training for different types of harassment or abuse: Networking with different organisations and learning about the protocols (for example, those attached below, drawn up by the Generalitat de Catalunya) to be followed if harassment, abuse or neglect are detected is essential. This will ensure that schools and teachers are aware of how to respond in these situations.

In order to obtain good training and consolidate best practices, we consider it essential to work with a network of specialised organisations, trainers and experts and to maintain connections with them.



BEST PRACTICE

Schools are spaces where students spend most of the day, live together and learn. It is for this reason that schools must be protected spaces that are safe and supportive for their students.

EMOTIONAL EDUCATION PROJECTS WITH STUDENTS

We consider it essential to work on emotions at school. It is important to allow space for students to talk about how they feel about themselves and their group.

Encouraging and enhancing emotional education allows us to create a welcoming climate that promotes the well-being of students and teachers. Therefore, the day-to-day running of our school is about combining academic and emotional learning.

In addition, emotional learning helps us to detect and prevent bullying earlier and to be able to act in a coherent and decisive way

Prevention, then, is a fundamental tool and we need to allocate time to it and think of educational proposals that allow students to empower themselves.



SPACES TO TALK

During the week we hold classroom assemblies or personalised tutorials with our students. By holding these conversations constantly, we try to offer safe spaces for our students to communicate and express how they feel about the people around them.

RELATIONSHIP WITH FAMILIES

Any school's relationship with families needs to be close, professional and trusting. Our goal is for the families of our students to feel listened to, accompanied, respected, and that they are part of the school community. This can help us to work with them effectively in the face of very difficult situations.

1. Staff meet families at the school gate at the beginning and end of the day.
2. Families can enter their children's class and teachers communicate easily with them.
3. Personalised parent-teacher meetings take place with all families.
4. Families have the option to receive students' termly reports in person.
5. Termly reports include an academic evaluation as well as a personal & emotional one.
6. Families actively participate in school life via: festivities, excursions, workshops, school maintenance, etc.



NOTE:

This section is written for in-situ/live/offline youth activities and events. Given the increase in online youth work during the pandemic and ever since, it is advised that separate e-safety policies be instituted within organisations that do a lot of their non-formal education online.

Technology can bring us together and can be an excellent source of international youth work. At the same time, there are plenty of online harms to be aware of, and the misuse of technology plays a significant role in many safeguarding issues. Topics such as digital safety and security, protection of privacy, disinformation issues, access to problematic online content, etc. should be addressed in the e-safety policy of organisations working with young people online.

For a website with useful resources on a range of online safety topics, see: www.childnet.com

VISION

The Croatian Education and Development Network for the Evolution of Communication (HERMES) is a non-government organisation from Croatia, active since 2011. The mission of HERMES is to deliver education based on principles of democratic citizenship, by developing and applying innovative (non-formal) educational programs. These programs promote non-violent communication methods such as critical thinking, active listening and radical empathy as tools for conflict resolution and prevention.

MISSION

HERMES works with young people on a regular basis, delivering short-term non-formal education. The following section describes the safeguarding approach that the HERMES team apply to their youth workshops, training sessions and exchanges.

THIS SECTION

Firstly, this section will cover the tasks related to safeguarding that must take place before holding youth event. Then, it will describe the safeguarding processes that need to be in place during a youth event, and go into more detail on how to respond to situations with safeguarding concerns. At the very end of this booklet, you can find several templates for documents that are useful for safeguarding young people who are taking part in short-term non-formal education.



SAFEGUARDING IN A NON-FORMAL EDUCATION SETTING

The biggest challenge for addressing safeguarding issues in the context of non-formal educational workshops or exchanges is their short-duration. This means that young people are only present with a given group of (inter)national young participants, staff, accompanying teachers, and/or trainers for a brief amount of time. There is often insufficient trust and openness for young people to express any issues that may arise. Therefore, the organising team and trainers should be highly vigilant and attentive, in order to identify any issues, address them in a timely manner, and prevent (further) harm.



Some examples of safeguarding issues that may arise during short-term training activities are:

1. Peer-to-peer abuse or bullying;
2. Allegations against staff;
3. Incidents of self-harm;
4. Discriminatory or hate speech remarks;
5. Discriminatory actions;
6. Sexual harassment or grooming; or
7. Other forms of unacceptable and illegal behaviour.



PREPARATION

As the saying goes, “an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure”.

The preparatory work that takes place ahead of a workshop or exchange for young people is essential to design a safe and healthy environment for young people to learn, meet their peers, and experience intercultural communication.

Should your organisation be in charge of an activity for young people (organising, recruiting participants, providing content, or supplying staff, etc.), then here are some of the points to keep in mind and prepare before the activity takes place.

1. Staff and trainer due diligence

When working with young people, it is important to ensure that all staff, as well as (regular) trainers and youth workers, undergo a vetting procedure and due diligence prior to being hired. Where possible, ask for a police check (confirmation that the individual has not been previously punished and is not currently under any form of investigation). It is also advised to screen prospective employees' and trainers' social media, as their online behaviour may be a good indicator of whether they are appropriate for youth work. A good criterion to apply when doing social media screening is to ask yourself, “Is this person a good role model for young people?”, on the basis of the content that they post or share online.

2. Ethical codes

Youth activities are attended by different types of adults, including staff, freelancers (e.g. trainers, guest speakers, experts), volunteers, accompanying chaperones or teachers, etc. It is important to develop codes of behaviour for each category of adults, adapted to their unique role at the youth event, workshop or exchange.

3. Parent or guardian consent forms

Where underage young people/minors participate in non-formal training events, it is necessary to obtain a signed parental or guardian release or approval form, consenting to their child taking part in the activity. These forms should refer to any media being recorded (for example, photographs or videos being taken during the event), specifying the intended usage of that media and privacy protection steps undertaken, etc.

4. Established safeguarding protocols

Make sure that your event or training activity has a clear safeguarding protocol in place, i.e. a clear steps-based process that should be followed if a safeguarding situation arises. There should be a clear chain of command for the individuals in the process (making sure that the process has no conflict of interest issues, or individuals immune to investigation).

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

If your organisation is sending young people to an activity organised by another institution, school or youth association, it would be wise to consult with them on safeguarding issues and have agreements in place. This should allow you to ensure that they are taking children and young people's safeguarding matters seriously before sending your young people. Some of steps advised in this situation are as follows:

- Conduct a due-diligence check on the partner organisation, checking their website and social media, as well as talking to any organisations or individuals you know they have worked with before who can give you some feedback about their work;
- Write and sign a Memorandum of Understanding or other formal agreement between the two organisations, specifying the aims, objectives, activities, roles of leaders, and responsibilities of each organisation within the joint project and/or youth activity. The agreement should include a safeguarding clause, specifying the commitment of both organisations to the safety and welfare of the young people involved in the project or activity;
- Take part in an advance planning visit to the partner organisation, to get a sense of their planning, and accountability mechanisms when it comes to the youth exchange or training activity that will take place in the future;
- Run a joint risk assessment, or have a checklist in place for the youth activity (that includes accommodation, activities, training staff, etc.).

1. Due diligence check
2. Memorandum of Understanding
3. Advanced planning visit
4. Joint risk assessment

DURING AN EVENT

When your youth training event or exchange is underway, it is important to ensure there is a sense of a safe space and to set behavioural expectations for the time spent together.

This means that behavioural standards should be communicated transparently and made well known within the participants' group – while making sure that they do not overshadow the event itself or the topic it is addressing.

CODE OF CONDUCT

One way of achieving this is to ask participants to sign a Code of Conduct prior to arriving at the activity or exchange, and then to refer to it during your introductory activities. Young people may want to query or add to what is in place.

A Code of Conduct can be placed on the wall in a workshop room so that young people have an active reminder of it during their activity or exchange. It is important to specify in the written Code of Conduct, and when presenting it to participants, what the complaints procedure is if they have a problem or feel uncomfortable. This will highlight who participants should talk to if they feel there is a problem, big or small. Alternative staff contacts should be available in case there is an issue surrounding the first contact or the participant would feel more comfortable talking to someone else.

The key takeaway here is to make the Code of Conduct and the process of making a complaint very clear, and to do so in a fun and engaging way so as not to overwhelm the participants or lead them to be hyper-sensitive and focused on reporting on each other, or the adults involved).

EXAMPLE RESPONSES TO SITUATIONS

This section will address some situations that may occur in non-formal educational activities, youth training, workshops or exchanges. Please note that the advice we (HERMES) provide in each of the hypothetical situations is adapted to our own unique youth activities and that given the setup and design of yours, you will likely need to adapt your own response protocol. One guideline we advise you to remember in all the scenarios is the element of confidentiality of the aggrieved individual., This should ensure that their coming forward does not result in an action or measure that would result in them receiving more hate or hurt. It is important to act with sensitivity and care not to worsen the situation.

Scenario One: Peer-to-Peer

Peer-to-peer abuse or bullying will sometimes be witnessed by adults or they will receive a report from a participant. As adults, it is our duty to respond to the allegations, or the witnessed incident in question (whether it was a single, isolated incident – or a series of incidents). After responding by talking to the participants involved and any witnesses separately,, if the allegation is confirmed, then our first reaction would be to talk with both students' chaperones (e.g. teachers, if they are present), to see if they were aware of any pre-existing issues. All the adults involved (event organisers, training staff, chaperones) should jointly address the situation by talking with the young people engaged in abusive behaviour, and the young people who are on the receiving end. Sanctions and punishments should be proportionate to the behaviour exhibited, with the option of sending the offending party home if they show little or no remorse or deny behaviour that was witnessed by others. If after discussion it is not clear whether an allegation is truthful, then we would continue close monitoring of the situation, including of the alleged bully, the victim and the dynamic between them.

Scenario Two: Youth Group Inappropriate Behaviour

Codes of Conduct for participants in events for young people usually include a clause forbidding the consumption of alcohol and other substances illegal for minors. If you discover that a group of young people attending your event or exchange has broken this rule, you need to alert their respective chaperones (e.g. teachers), who will then be tasked with administering the appropriate sanctions. If there are no chaperones involved and the young people are entrusted fully to your care, then you as the organiser and host institution need to respond to the misbehaviour, and then ensure sanctions discourage it in future. If necessary, calls should be made to the young people's school, parents or guardians, to alert them to the behaviour.

EXAMPLE RESPONSES

Scenario Three: Adult-to-Minor

If it is reported that an adult (staff member, trainer, etc.) has made an inappropriate remark or gesture, or engaged in another type of inappropriate behaviour, the organisers should respond accordingly. If the complaint was not anonymous, the organisers should talk with the young person or people who made it. In a separate meeting, the accused adult should be invited to offer their explanation of the incident, while being explicitly forbidden to engage in any direct or private communication with the participant(s) who made the complaint. If the meetings make clear that the complaint is accurate, the adult in question should either be requested to apologise to the participant(s) or be asked to leave the youth training event (depending on the severity of the inappropriate behaviour). If the investigation is inconclusive, it is advised to continue monitoring the situation closely and to prevent any private or direct communication between the accused adult and the reporting young person.

Scenario Four: Adult-to-Adult

If an adult engages in inappropriate behaviour with another adult (e.g. insults, demeans, discriminates against or otherwise hurts or harms), the organisers should conduct an investigation and have open communication with the individuals involved. If the offending adult does not show sufficient remorse or offer an apology, and/or if the affected adult does not feel comfortable working alongside this individual anymore, the offending adult should be asked to leave the event.

Scenario Five: Issue Surfaces in Evaluation Phase (after the end)

Sometimes, you only become aware that there was a problem after an event has taken place. For example, you may come across a comment in an evaluation survey, which may be filled out anonymously by participants, that informs you that there was inappropriate behaviour that led to a participant feeling unsafe. In this case, and especially if the identity of the offender is unknown, you need to have an open dialogue with your entire team (staff, trainers) in order to determine what happened and to make sure that similar incidents do not happen again.

CONCLUSION

We have participated in the 'Safeguarding Our Young People' project as HERMES in Croatia because of our and our project partners' concerns regarding children's and young people's well-being and safeguarding practices. The goal of raising awareness about safeguarding issues within our non-formal education, youth workshops and training, is to reduce the likelihood of incidents occurring and to nurture a positive and safe environment for youth exchanges, learning and having fun. If we openly assess the risks, carry out occasional safeguarding policy self-audits and updates, and maintain a culture of vigilance around young people's welfare, then our workshops, training and exchanges bringing together young people from all over Europe (and beyond) will stand a better chance of meeting their full potential and having a positive, transformative impact on the participating young people.



RIGHTS

Children cannot protect themselves alone but are dependent on the help of adults. However, they also have a right to participate and to help shape their living environment. Our task is to empower and support children and young people in their development.

It is not enough to avert potential dangers for children and young people. It is also necessary to empower young people so that they can recognise and name behaviour that violates their boundaries. However, this only works in an atmosphere characterised by respect and tolerance, in which the needs and limits of the other person can be respected. Where possible we should agree on rules of conduct for dealing with each other together with the children and young people,

WHO WE ARE

The Sportkreisjugend Rems-Murr is the umbrella organisation for all sports club members aged under 27 in the Rems-Murr district. With over 300 members, we are the largest youth association in the district and represent the interests of youth sports. The primary target group of the Sportkreisjugend Rems-Murr are the youth leaders and youth workers in the sports clubs. We want to support them in word and deed, help them solve their problems and support them in doing good youth work, as well as provide advice and support in the area of subsidies.

We advise in all matters of youth work and try to be a partner for the work with young people in the association. We want to strengthen our position in the sports district and, in the sense of a future-oriented approach, do justice to the changing social and cultural conditions.

WHAT WE DO

The Sportkreisjugend has many functions, it represents the interests of the more than 300 sports clubs and sports associations in the most diverse bodies and committees of the Rems-Murr district. The delegates of the sports district youth work to improve the framework conditions for sporting youth work and to influence political decisions.



GUIDELINES

This is an aid to preparing safeguarding guidelines based on a tool from the Württembergische Sportkreisjugend.

Not all of the following points are mandatory for a good safeguarding guideline: it is for you to create your own guidelines based on your organisation's needs.

For broad prevention and safeguarding guidelines, it's important to include all levels in a club. For example, the executive committee, employees, and the children you are working with.

1. Positioning of the executive committee

It may be pertinent to establish an executive committee. Executive committee members are responsible for the children in your club. It is your duty to make sure that they are protected from any kind of harm. So as a first step, you have to speak up positively for active child protection in your club. The following may help:

- How do you want to deal with the topic of child protection in your club?
- Do you need more information? Who can you contact for that?
- Which worries and fears do you have while dealing with this topic?
- Which protection measures do you want to establish in your structures?
- How do you want to deal with abusive actions in the future?

2. Ethical codes

Appoint representatives (ideally two, male & female) to be trustworthy contacts for children, parents, and staff in your association. Their role should be formulated as precisely as possible and always in consultation with the executive committee.

They should:

- Be trustworthy contacts for anyone who is affected by or observes abuse, receiving complaints and intervening appropriately as necessary.
- Expand their knowledge on the topic and communicate it with others.
- Establish contact with experts from municipal and regional sports associations and specialised agencies that deal with harms such as sexualised violence.
- Coordinate prevention measures, including a code of conduct for volunteers or employees, recruitment guidelines, or strengthening the rights of children.
- Draw up a procedure for dealing with reported suspicions so that everyone knows how to respond, together with the executive committee and any counsellors. This plan of action should specify responsibilities, competent contact points, immediate measures and how to pass on information.
- Ensure adequate record keeping of prevention measures.
- Inform the children, young people, club staff and parents about their role as trusted individuals who can be contacted in case of problems.

GUIDELINES

3. Code of conduct for staff or volunteers

An important component of safeguarding is the development of a behavioural guideline on staff dealings with children. Clear rules of conduct for staff who work in close proximity with children or in areas of a building that cannot be seen serve to ensure safety. They also help staff or volunteers protect themselves from unjustified suspicions. When drawing up a code of conduct, the particular risks of the field of work, the profile of the organisation, and any potentially dangerous situations should be taken into account. It is not a matter of establishing rules for all conceivable eventualities, rather the aim is to create principles that are as clear, comprehensible and practicable. What is not practicable does not work! The Code of Conduct can be used as a declaration of commitment for full-time, part-time and voluntary staff. In these cases, it is signed and represents a written agreement on professionalism.

Examples of protection agreements within a Code of Conduct:

- The Youth Protection Act is observed in all contact with children & young people.
- Coaches should not conduct individual training sessions without the possibility of control and access by third parties. In one-to-one situations (training, talks), the "open door principle" is observed.
- Individual children should not receive gifts from staff members.
- Individual children should not be taken into staff-only areas.
- Staff members shower and spend the night separately from the children. Changing rooms are only entered after knocking on the door & gaining consent.
- All agreements are public. No secrets are shared with children and young people.
- Physical contact with children and young people (e.g. technique training, control, encouragement, consolation or congratulation) must not take place against the children's will. Consent must be obtained and these must be wanted and must not exceed the reasonable coaching level.
- The board will be informed about all exceptions OR all exceptions will be discussed with a previously agreed person.

Note: The inspection of the extended certificate of good conduct or local equivalent does not guarantee compliance with the protection of children and young people and should therefore only be one component of a comprehensive set of safeguarding guidelines. Also remember to comply with data protection regulations.

4. Staff/volunteer inductions

Inducting new employees or volunteers should include explaining that the safeguarding of children is very important to you and your club.

Example items for inductions:

- Presenting your safeguarding policy.
- Explaining your operational procedures in cases of suspected abuse.
- Information about the club's internal contact person.
- Ask for the motivation, qualifications, and experience of previous work as an instructor
- Ask for and follow-up references from former clubs or associations
- Provide options for training on abuse and the management of those topics. As appropriate, make them mandatory.
- Inspecting an extended certificate of good conduct or appropriate local equivalent. This may be a legal requirement, as it is in Germany under the Federal Child Protection Act.

INCLUSION

Common sport is a human right. Inclusion is when everyone is allowed to take part. Being inclusive therefore means facilitating the participation of all children no matter their ability or background.

Understanding that inclusion means appreciating diversity is a necessary condition for an inclusive culture. When children and young people learn to perceive and value each other's differences, they should see them not as problems to be overcome, but as opportunities. Therefore we need to see everyone as individuals by highlighting personal efforts and strengths, e.g: social competencies. Participating in an inclusive sports club is not only the responsibility of the club. It is a culture that has to be created by everyone involved. This includes the committee, staff, participants, and wider community.

GENDER DIVERSITY IN SPORT

Most sports are divided using a binary gender system (male/female). The problem is that these categories do not fit all people. Transgender, intersex and non-binary people are not taken into account, and can thus get into difficulties with pressure to explain and conform or experiences of exclusion within a sports club. Structural conditions such as binary-separated changing rooms, showers or toilets without separate individual cubicles can lead to experiences of discrimination in addition to the feared devaluations and discrimination by peers, trainers or coaches. Furthermore, there are usually no suitable training and/or competitions for non-binary, transgender or intersex persons. They are thus excluded from competitions and/or teams because of their gender identity. Therefore, there is a conscious need for action for clubs and associations. In the following, some possible courses of action for clubs are outlined:

- *Active positioning against discrimination (e.g. in policies, through procedures and demonstration eg. posters etc.)*
- *Promoting diversity in sports clubs (e.g. by encouraging people to take on positions, or creating working groups) and proactive invitation of transgender, intersex and non-binary people (e.g. on the website, through imagery at the training venue)*
- *Sensitisation of trainers and club members (e.g. further training, information material...)*
- *Clear contact persons and procedures for dealing with discrimination (e.g. anti-discrimination officers, complaint procedures)*
- *In training: use of names and neutral pronouns, correct addressing of participants*
- *Inclusive infrastructure (e.g. individual all-gender changing rooms, individual showers, etc.)*

BULLYING

Bullying occurs as physical and emotional abuse in the sports club, such as "ganging up" by peers, subordinates or superiors, through rumour, innuendo, intimidation, humiliation, discrediting, and isolation.

Indications of a wider culture of bullying in a sports club:

- *Poor atmosphere in the sports club*
- *Tension between the trainer and the club leadership*
- *Exclusion/isolation of a person(s) during the sport or after the sport*
- *Behavioural change of the person(s) (aggressive or withdrawn)*
- *The play opposite of the person is unfriendly, distant and insulting*
- *The person is missing training*

Approaches to the prevention of bullying:

- *Foster an open/welcoming atmosphere in the sports club with a culture of respect towards all club members*
- *Talk about conflicts after training*
- *Enable & present unity in the team & the club leadership*
- *Provide targeted & general workshops when needed*
- *Talk to the person(s) involved with any suspected bullying*
- *Talk with the club leadership – there should be a united approach to tackling bullying*
- *Talk with the club commissioner about prolonged problems*
- *Ensure an anti-bullying strategy is embedded into both member and staff/volunteer codes of conduct*

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Humiliation, threats, insults and verbal abuse are examples of emotional abuse.

Prevention measures:

Clear contact points, which children know and can easily approach in person, through e-mail and telephone are essential. Furthermore, the club needs to be aware that emotional abuse happens and to have paths to proactively reach out to those who need advice and support.

To act preventatively against emotional abuse, trainers & children should have conversations around the topic to recognise what is okay and what is not. This may involve watching film material, engaging in a mutual exchange about values and boundaries, and talking through negative and positive scenarios.

HOMOPHOBIA

Homophobia is still prevalent in sports. It is important to demonstrate that this is not tolerated and that your sports club is a safe space. This can be achieved by embedding anti-discrimination into your codes of conduct for staff, volunteers and young people and demonstrating with posters and social media/website posts.

Behaviour as a coach or person in charge:

1. *Be attentive: look and listen. Watch out for casual jokes and words that mention LGBTQIA+ individuals in a derogatory way and react to them. Demonstrate that comments such as this are not OK.*
2. *Talk about stereotypes and show the athletes that sexual orientation does not affect performance, nor should a person be judged by it.*
3. *Promote a tolerant and respectful attitude towards each other.*

How to react if a member of your team tells you that he or she is LGBTQIA+:

Coming out is a brave step and needs support. React positively and show the person that you accept them. If requested, support them in the planning of their coming out but always keep their information private. It is their decision if, when and who they want to tell about their identity. ***Never force someone to come out!***

RACISM

Racism and right-wing extremism are not problems on the fringes of society but have long since arrived in the middle. Sport has the potential and the possibility to contribute to a culture of recognition and participation. The structures of the clubs must be designed in such a way that these social, preventive and integrative functions can unfold and that there is no room for racism, discrimination and exclusion.

GENERAL RECCOMENDATIONS

1. *Setting a visible sign against right-wing extremism*

Especially in cases of intervention, but also for prevention, it is important that the club sets a precedent against racism, discrimination and anti-semitism (e.g. through a code of conduct displayed in the clubhouse, banners, declaration of the German Sports Youth against right-wing extremism). It is recommended to include a clause in the club's statutes stating that a member can be expelled from the club for right-wing extremist attitudes.

2. *Analyse situations and adapt measures accordingly*

In order to be able to plan measures in a targeted way, it is important to know where problems might lie, what goals are to be pursued, and what activities are suitable to achieve them.

It is also useful to know whether there are any supporters in the association, and if so, which ones.

3. *Take responsibility, avoid excessive demands*

It is the responsibility of all those associated with the club to address incidents from the top down. The board of directors holds a key position in the associations. It is therefore important that they initiate or support the measures themselves. It is recommended to communicate promptly with all those involved with the club. This can ensure a widespread anti-racism culture.

4. *Ensure broad and active participation*

It is advisable to develop measures with association members so they understand & support them, and to reveal if there are opposing views. To involve as many members as possible, it makes sense to be transparent. Broad participation is ideal (e.g. seniors, young people, boys, girls etc.). Furthermore, activities that are fun help to mobilise people and other groups may provide support.

5. *Linking measures to everyday life in the sports club and using the attractiveness of sport*

Young people may engage with the topic more if it is linked to sporting activities eg fair play tournaments again promoting an anti-racist culture within the club.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION IN INTERVENTION CASES

Right-wing extremist threats and attacks must not be ignored and trivialised. Empowering those affected and supporting each other helps them not to be intimidated.

Take a clear stand on incidents

It is important for the association against racism and right-wing extremism to take a stand quickly. It makes sense to draw up a preventive intervention plan in which the position of the association is also written down. This facilitates communication, which is often difficult in a crisis.

Seek communication with all those involved

In internal cases, those involved must be identified. Are they individuals or a group? It is important to clarify if other members feel discriminated against or uncomfortable. Those involved should be specifically included in communications. It may be necessary to hold wider group discussions.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse includes various forms of exercising power by means of sexuality.

For instance, it can be found in sexualised abuse without physical contact (eg. sexist jokes, lewd remarks, messages with sexual content), sexualised boundary violations (eg. inappropriate touching) and sexual abuse with physical contact (eg. kisses, sexual touching, attempted sex).

PREVENTION MEASURES:

The term 'prevention measures' here includes all measures which should hinder incidents and perpetration of sexual abuse in a youth sports context. Therefore, it is important that the executive board of the club position itself, which includes an anchoring of the guiding principle about safeguarding and suitable prevention measures in the statutes of the club.

Furthermore, the topic of sexual abuse is important, not only, during the induction of new employees, but also during the regular refresher course on this topic for long-standing trainers. Again, a police certificate of good conduct or local equivalent can help to prevent sexual abuse as any crimes, particularly those these in relation to children or people in general, come to light.

Rules of conduct that seem self-evident to one person, and perhaps exaggerated to another because they may not know any difference, are key. This includes, for example, the rule that the coaches are forbidden to shower with the children, to be in the locker room when the children are changing, or to inappropriately consult with the parents in case of individual training. Precisely because physical contact can often occur in sports (e.g. assistance with a gymnastics exercise), rules of conduct must also apply here, such as obtaining the consent of the person to be touched.

As important as rules of conduct are, raising awareness among coaches is still key to preventing sexual abuse. Awareness training that specialises in the emergence of sexual abuse and the preventive measures against it, increases the protection for children and young people in sports. These can be delivered by professional protection officers. Another task of these professional protection officers is to listen to children, youth, trainers and parents. All of them can turn to the professional protection officers in confidence if they do not feel well or have something in mind.

Signing a code of ethics may seem at first glance to be more circumstantial, but signing this makes trainers again aware of rules and regulations once again. Parents are responsible for their children and are the first contact person for the individual needs of the children. For this reason, parents should also be actively involved in prevention measures to protect against sexual abuse. Last but not least, the rights of young people should be strengthened in order to prevent and avoid sexual abuse. In the process, children should be made aware of and informed about their rights and who they can turn to if they need help.



Boys and Girls Clubs of Wales
Clybiau Bechgyn a Merched Cymru

WHO ARE WE?

Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Wales is a national voluntary youth work organisation offering young people new and attractive opportunities by providing a full and varied programme of educational, cultural, sporting and social activities.

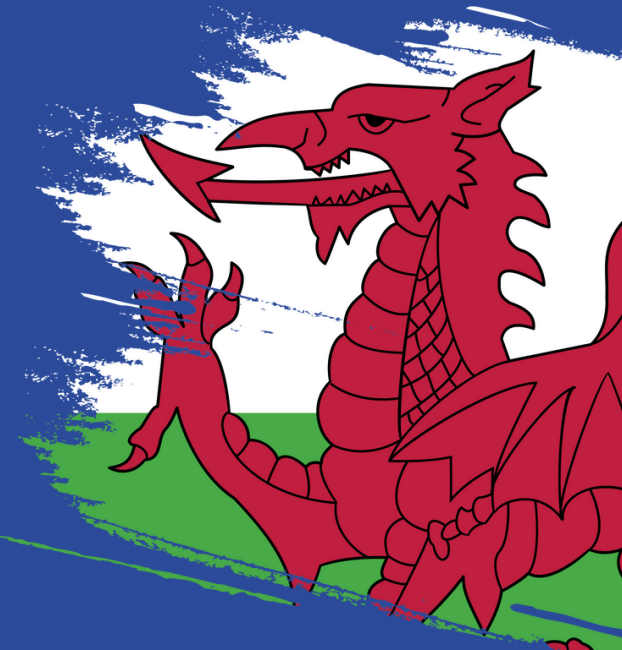
From its early beginnings in the 1920s, the organisation has developed into being recognised as one of the most progressive youth work organisations in the UK. The organisation continues to offer service and support to young people throughout Wales in traditional boys' and girls' clubs, community youth clubs and clubs providing sports and activities.

YOUTH CLUBS

A youth club is a safe space for young people to voluntarily attend and engage with each other and youth workers. It's a place where young people can build positive relationships and become part of a community.

They can take part in a variety of activities and experiences which facilitate informal learning and personal development. Unlike some other youth engagement activities, young people often attend on a semi-regular or regular basis which can impact the safeguarding issues likely to occur.

Youth clubs give young people the opportunity to grow with the support of their peers and youth workers.



BEFORE OPENING

If professionals are engaging young people in a youth club context they should have a variety of things in place to appropriately safeguard both staff/volunteers and most importantly young people:

- Correct insurance
- Safeguarding policy and a clear line of reporting
- Risk assessments for activities and venue
- Code of behaviour for staff
- Clear purpose of the club
- Checked/qualified workers/volunteers

ONCE OPERATING

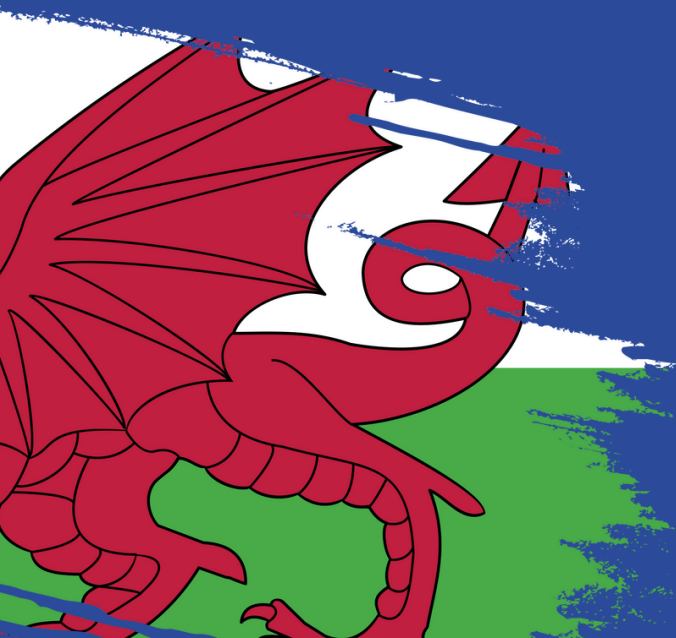
It is imperative that both staff and young people have a clear idea of the expectations of behaviour within the youth club. Therefore it is best practice to consult all parties in the creation of a Code of Conduct for the club. This can be tailored to the young people in attendance and might have different content depending on the needs of the young people. This should be signed by both staff and young people and the consequences of breaking this should be pre-agreed. (eg. 3-strike rule).

All staff and volunteers should be aware of the safeguarding standards they are expected to follow. This can be achieved by having clear policies and procedures in place. These should be shown to staff/volunteers when they first start working at the club and should also be available for refreshers and updates.

Policies and procedures explain how to achieve the goals that your club sets out to reach. They should reflect the values the club upholds & should inform and be informed by expected staff conduct and professional boundaries.

Policies: Clear statements of conduct within a service, providing guidelines for decision-making.

Procedures: The step-by-step process of actioning policy. It will include how tasks should be undertaken, who is responsible for those tasks and outline the necessary methods of record taking.



PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

As people in 'positions of trust' how youth workers present, interact and conduct themselves is vital.

Appropriate behaviour and presentation reduces the risk of allegations of abuse and reduces the risk of harm to everyone: staff/volunteers and young people. For example:

- *No use of inappropriate nicknames*
- *No excessive or inappropriate comments on appearances (both flattering and critical)*
- *Ensuring non-verbal communication is appropriate (eg. body language, facial expressions, eye contact)*
- *No adding young people as 'friends' on social media*
- *Don't overshare personal information with young people eg. address*
- *Do not contact young people in contexts unrelated to your role.*
- *No photographing/recording/publishing content of young people without the necessary consent – this content should also not be stored on personal devices or equipment*
- *No unnecessary or unwanted physical contact with young people*
- *Never discuss information regarding co-workers or young people with anyone who doesn't need to know*
- *Don't give, borrow or accept money or gifts*

SAFEGUARDING SIGNS & CONCERNS TO WATCH

When safeguarding young people, staff, volunteers and the general public, there are some signs that may indicate there is a safeguarding concern. Sometimes young people are experiencing difficulties or abuse and they do not feel comfortable speaking to adults or friends about them. There are often non-explicit or nonverbal signs that something is wrong. Some things to consider:

- Withdrawal from social groups
- Behavioural changes
- Lack of sleep
- Behaviour that could be considered 'disruptive or inappropriate'
- Missing school or recurring clubs/activities
- Clothing becomes inappropriate for the activities/climate/occasion
- Self-harming behaviour or attempts at suicide

APPROACHING CONCERNS

When you believe there is a potential for some form of abuse or neglect to be taking place there are ways of addressing these concerns. This depends on different factors such as time, place, and type of safeguarding concern. When speaking to an individual, some positive points to remember are the following:

1. Speak with another professional/adult

It is good practice to speak with another relevant adult before addressing your concerns with the individual themselves. Having someone reinforce your concerns will help you make decisions whether the issue is a general issue within the club or is specific and requires immediate action.

2. Opening a conversation

If you want to bring up possibly sensitive topics, how you go about it will determine whether or not you are able to support the individual. Asking them directly about the issue may cause stress. It may be appropriate to ask for a private conversation away from the general activities of the club, using open language like 'We haven't seen you in a while, how are you?' 'I noticed you're wearing a coat and it's really hot out today'. It's important to remember that these conversations must be voluntary and the young person should not be forced to discuss suspected abuse - this should not be an investigation.

3. Privacy and confidentiality

When speaking with young people about safeguarding topics it's generally a good idea to discuss these topics in private (away from other young people) and in places the young person can consider 'safe'. Ideally, there should be two adults present when discussing safeguarding concerns with a young person.

It is important to state your duty of care and how that affects confidentiality and the need to pass on information. *duty of care: a legal duty to provide a standard of care to young people in your responsibility and to act in ways that protect their safety and prioritise their wellbeing.

APPROACHING CONCERNS - CONT.

4. Remain calm and neutral

Before discussing your concerns with the young person, it is vital that you consider and prepare how you will act during the discussion. This interaction, if dealt with unprofessionally, has the potential to be a traumatic experience for that young person. For example, the young person could feel guilt for upsetting you, or they may decide that confiding in others doesn't help, impacting their ability to open up to trusted adults later in life. However, when dealt with in a professional manner, it can be a positive moment, where your relationship is strengthened, and you are able to start taking steps as a safe and trusted adult to help that young person.

By remaining calm and neutral, trusted adults are able to offer the young person a safe space to talk, sharing their thoughts, feelings and experiences. This allows trusted adults to listen and ask open questions that will help us to unpack with the young person what is going on. It allows the young person to feel supported and safe and allows us to thank them for their trust in telling us, and remind them that they've done the right thing in sharing. It is vital that we offer this approach to young people we work with in order to best support them when dealing with safeguarding concerns.

5. Capturing and recording information

It is vital that information from young people about safeguarding concerns is recorded promptly and accurately. It should be submitted to the appropriate authorities in accordance with safeguarding procedures. The record should include the key points set out on the next page.

Best practice is to send this as an electronic copy to your DSP (Designated Safeguarding Person). This will create a timestamp and proof that you acted and recorded the information in line with your duty of care. Following a disclosure, allegation or accusation of abuse, the priority should always be to support the young person or young people involved

KEY POINTS TO RECORD

- Child's details e.g. name, age, address, phone number, etc.
- The nature of the allegation, including the dates, times, etc.
- A description of the signs, for example, any visible injuries or indirect signs
- Details of the witnesses
- An account of what the child has said
- Who the alleged abuser is if known
- Who was consulted, give details.
- What action was taken, by whom, and when.

Following a disclosure, allegation or accusation of abuse, the priority should always be to support the young person or young people involved.

QUICK DOS AND DON'TS OF DISCLOSURE

- Do have a blank face, do not appear shocked or upset
- Do remain non-reactive and stay calm
- Do inform the young person of your duty of care to pass on information
- Do use open questions and allow the young person to disclose in their own time
- Don't ask 'Why...?' as the young person may feel blamed
- Don't prompt or fill in speech
- Do remain non-investigative until necessary
- Don't repeat questions/answers
- Do tell the young person what is being passed on
- Don't make promises you can't keep eg. 'it won't happen again' or 'I won't tell anyone'
- Don't contact or confront the alleged abuser
- Do write down the disclosure in the young person's words
- Do report the allegation as soon as possible
- Do keep records of disclosure and any decisions/actions taken

ORIGINS OF SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Safeguarding issues within a youth club context may arise from different areas although the same reporting procedures should be followed.

1. Peer to peer

Peer Abuse can be defined as a person or group bringing excessive mistreatment, insult or deception to another individual of the same peer group. This is done physically, mentally, emotionally or sexually. This can span many different contexts: bullying/cyberbullying, racism, gender-based discrimination, and Child Sexual Exploitation. Depending on the severity of this abuse it may be possible to deal with it in-house with conflict management techniques. Any altercation should still be recorded using the the correct record-keeping procedure.

2. Staff to young person

Though we do our best when vetting who can work/volunteer within a youth club setting, DBS checks or (international equivalents) and appropriate qualifications can only ensure there is no history of abuse and that staff have the appropriate knowledge. Staff to young person allegations should be taken very seriously. As with any other allegation, when a disclosure is made to staff/volunteers they should follow the procedure in place. It is vital that the DSP (designated safeguarding person) or senior worker is contacted as soon as possible to advise how workers should proceed. The DSP and senior staff should make a prompt decision about whether the accused should be initially suspended until further police and social services inquiries. Irrespective of police or social services inquiries the DSP and senior staff should review all individual cases to decide whether the accused person can return and how this return will be handled. The welfare of the young person should remain of paramount importance throughout.

3. Young person to staff

In some instances, young people may be the instigators of abuse towards staff members. Staff/volunteer welfare is also a priority. Some instances of abuse from young people may not be intentional or malicious. In these instances, it is important to work with the staff member or volunteer to ensure they feel supported while you put conflict resolution and information sessions in place to educate young people on the behaviours they are engaging in. There may be instances where this is not a solution and young people need to be banned from further participation with the organisation - for example where a crime has been committed. It is important to consider in advance how your organisation will address these issues, if or when they occur.

4. External – adult to young person or young person to young person

Reports of historic or ongoing abuse externally to your organisation should be recorded and reported following the safeguarding procedure. If the young person is immediately at risk of harm should they leave the club it may be necessary to call the emergency services or relevant authorities in your local jurisdiction. For less immediate issues discuss the disclosure with your DSP and ensure an electronic record is completed and sent.

MOVING FORWARD

Following a disclosure or safeguarding incident it is vital that both the staff/volunteers and young people feel supported. Safeguarding incidents can be traumatic and it is the responsibility of those in charge to reduce this trauma.

SUPPORTING STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

Following a safeguarding incident or disclosure there should be a debrief where the staff/volunteers present are able to talk through the incident with senior workers either as a group or individually. This can help staff/volunteers decompress and not 'take their work home'. During this time a staff member/volunteer may remember more details of the event which can be recorded. This debrief should be kept on record in case of further incidents or investigations. This can be an opportunity to reflect on future practice. The debrief can also ensure that paperwork is completed and where necessary passed on.

Staff/volunteers should also have the opportunity to have supervisions/meetings with senior staff on a regular basis. This is an opportunity to bring up further training needs or unresolved issues following an incident.

Please see the separate appendices document for lots of helpful resources provided by partner organisations

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

Following a serious safeguarding incident the life of a young person can become turbulent and it is likely that the relationship between staff/volunteers and young people may be impacted. Young people can feel betrayed by the volunteer/staff member for passing on the information and blame them for subsequent events. It is imperative that the changes in relationships are managed effectively as youth clubs can be a constant in a young person's life and a place that facilitates contact with 'safe adults'. Young people may want space and time to work through what they are feeling and a worker should not prioritise their own feelings about this over the young person's process. You may never repair the relationship completely and the young person may prefer to work with alternative staff in future. This is not necessarily a negative reflection on the member of staff/volunteer.

It can be useful to signpost young people to services and organisations that can help them work through the issues they are facing.

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