



TAFISA
The Association For International Sport for All

SAFEGUARDING IN SPORT FOR ALL

GUIDELINES

Are you taking all necessary steps to maintain safety for participants and individuals involved in sports within your organisation?

Have you implemented measures to ensure a safe and secure environment for those participating in your sport?

Our safeguarding guidelines provide information on safeguarding practices and offer guidance on creating a safe environment.

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SAFEGUARDING IN SPORT FOR ALL

Safeguarding involves creating a safe, secure, healthy, and engaging atmosphere for sports and physical activity participation. It prioritises the safety and well-being of all participants, including children, seniors, young people, vulnerable communities, and everyone involved. Those in charge of sports are responsible for creating an environment with no harm and abuse.

WHY SAFEGUARDING IN SPORT FOR ALL

Participating in sports and physical activities must be enjoyable, satisfying, safe and secure. It is crucial to establish an environment that allows participants to perform their best, excel in their sport, and most importantly have fun and reap the benefits of physical activity. However, there have been numerous instances of abuse, mismanagement, sexual harassment, bullying, racism, and other forms of discrimination in sports that often go unnoticed and unpunished. Unfortunately, this has resulted in many leaving sports altogether, some not finding enjoyment, and others leaving their careers prematurely. This is especially the case among women and girls. These unsafe practices undermine efforts to increase participation, promote physical activity, and retain vulnerable communities in sports.



RECOGNISE AND RESPOND

TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS, ABUSE AND HARM

What the signs of harassment and abuse are

Abuse can happen to an athlete or participant regardless of age, gender, race or ability. Participants including athletes may be abused by adults or by others. Abuse in sport could be any form that leads to injury or harm, including:

- physical
- emotional
- sexual
- emotional or psychological
- nullying behaviour
- poor practice
- financial or material abuse
- modern slavery
- human trafficking
- discriminatory abuse
- organisational or institutional abuse
- neglect or acts of omission.
- self-neglect

RECOGNISE AND RESPOND

TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS, ABUSE AND HARM

Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may include:

- The behaviour of an adult towards a child or participants (athlete, coach, volunteer, administrator or officials);
- The behaviour of an athlete towards other athletes, including bullying;
- Risks identified through recruitment processes, such as criminal records information;
- Information about an individual provided by statutory agencies, other sport, or identified through the press;
- Allegations of abuse;
- Concerns about harm to an athlete or participants even outside of sport.

A safeguarding concern might come to light in several ways, including through the safeguarding policy, the complaints system, a disciplinary process or recruitment procedures. It can be helpful to consider all safeguarding concerns existing on a scale.

- Low-level concerns are at one end of the scale when small rules are broken. An example of a low-level problem could be inadequate equipment or a one-off incident where a policy was not thoroughly followed.
- At the opposite end of the scale is the persistent poor practice or severe breaches of the code of conduct and illegal situations such as abuse.

RECOGNISE AND RESPOND

TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS, ABUSE AND HARM

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

- Understand what consent is and encourage your participants to learn about it
<https://olympics.com/athlete365/integrity/what-is-consent/>
- Understand that not reporting is not an option
- Anyone should be encouraged to report if they notice an incident or irregularity that requires safeguarding or if they have a concern, complaint, compliment, or suggestion
- Report for safeguarding concerns should be made safely and securely.
- Create a reporting process and avail contacts for people in charge of safeguarding in sport organisation
- Raise awareness and make the environment conducive for people to speak up
- Check out the safe sport directory
<https://olympics.com/athlete365/safe-sport/safe-sport-directory/>

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

IN SPORT FOR ALL

It is essential for sports to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for all participants, particularly children and vulnerable communities, who should feel secure and have a positive experience. To minimise risks, all Sport for All organisations must adhere to the following principles:

- The safety and well-being of athletes and participants are paramount in the safeguarding process;
- It is the responsibility of all individuals involved to ensure participants' protection and a safe environment;
- Any safeguarding-related concerns must be addressed through a fair and transparent process;
- When implementing initiatives to prevent harassment and abuse, consideration should be given to the cultural context of society and sport;
- Education tailored to athletes, parents, managers, sports administrators, fans, and sponsors should be provided;
- Guidelines should be established to enable athletes and participants to seek confidential help and support for any protection issue. The promotion of inclusion and diversity is essential to dispel exclusion.

More Safeguarding principles can be found here:

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

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

Source: <https://safeinsport.org/resources/#eight-safeguards>

The 8 International Safeguards for Children in Sport

HAVE A SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1

A safeguarding policy shows your organisation's dedication to protecting participants from harm. It provides clear guidelines for everyone involved, including staff, coaches, athletes, volunteers, and partners.

KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD

2

Your organisation needs to have a clear action plan in case of a safeguarding concern. This includes appointing a safeguarding focal point and outlining procedures for adequately documenting and monitoring concerns. Your organisation can respond quickly, accurately, and transparently with step-by-step guidance.

PROVIDE ADVICE AND SUPPORT TO STAFF, CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

3

It is essential to ensure that everyone within your organisation understands their role in safeguarding and knows where to seek information and guidance internally and externally. It is necessary to provide additional support for children and vulnerable communities

UNDERSTAND AND ADDRESS RISK

4

To effectively prevent or minimise potential risks, it is crucial first to understand and identify them. Conducting ongoing risk assessments for various aspects such as activities, sports training, facilities, programmes, transportation, accommodation, and staff training can assist in reducing the likelihood of harm or determining if an action should be discontinued altogether.

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

Source: <https://safeinsport.org/resources/#eight-safeguards>

AGREE ON WHAT IS ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

5

Children's sport should be carried out in a safe and encouraging environment. Creating and sharing codes of conduct for adults and children sets a safeguarding standard, encourages mutual respect, and promotes best practices among all involved.

SAFELY RECRUIT AND TRAIN YOUR STAFF

6

All members of your organisation must take responsibility for ensuring safety. One way to achieve this is by creating a dependable recruitment and staff development plan. This will enable you to hire suitable staff and volunteers who can learn safeguarding skills and uphold essential principles.

SHARE SAFEGUARDING WITH YOUR PARTNERS

7

Obtaining the support of your partners and stakeholders regarding your safeguarding policy can significantly enhance the protection of your sport. Creating clear and transparent expectations for safeguarding can foster positive and collaborative relationships. In addition, you can encourage and aid your partners and stakeholders in improving their safeguarding practices.

MONITOR, EVALUATE AND LEARN

8

It is important to remember that safeguarding is an ongoing process. As you progress in your safeguarding journey, allocate time for reassessment and evaluation to determine what is working well and what areas require improvement.



CREATING A SAFEGUARDING CULTURE

IN YOUR ORGANISATION

Guide for Sport for All Organisations

It is essential for Sport for All organisations to have clear guidance on safety and safeguarding procedures. Check if you have systems in place through the self-assessment tools [here](#).

Have an effective safeguarding framework and policy

- To ensure the safety of sports, organisations need to establish clear procedures within their policies and frameworks. This should include preventative measures and a code of conduct for everyone involved, including staff, coaches, volunteers and participants. If you want to know how to create a safeguarding policy, click [here](#). ([sample policy statement](#))
- It is essential for your organisation to appoint a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or welfare officer who is trained in safeguarding so that anyone can report concerns.
- A code of conduct should be established for all members involved, including participants, coaches, officials, staff, volunteers, parents, and children. All individuals must receive a copy of this document to familiarise themselves with its contents. ([sample code of conduct](#))
- It is essential for organisations must ensure that all members adhere to agreed-upon procedures to establish a safe environment. This includes promoting an understanding of how to report safeguarding concerns and reassuring everyone that their concerns will be taken seriously.

- Ensure partner organisations are aligned with the safeguarding policy.
- Conduct regular risk assessments and implement a safeguarding plan.
- Monitor the safeguarding policy measures and review them regularly.

Develop safeguarding advocates for early conversations about your organisation's desired outcomes for safeguarding

- Build awareness of when harassment and abuse could occur and how to stop it.
- Create an environment that will make everyone confident to challenge poor practices in your organisation.
- Create a culture of listening to participants – children, youth and adults.
- Build connections and contacts with critical personnel in the police, law enforcement, social services and support, and counselling units for referrals.
- Have zero tolerance for anyone mocking or picking on a child, making racist or sexist remarks, or acting inappropriately with participants.
- Listen to firsthand accounts from vulnerable participants about the impact of sports on their lives, the challenges they have faced, and how you can help ensure their safety while participating.
- Communicate safeguarding procedures to participants, parents/carers and the wider community.
- Encourage your officers and volunteers to take pledges towards creating a safer environment for sports. (*sample of a pledge*)

Ensure that all staff & volunteers have appropriate training

- To comply with safeguarding standards, all staff and volunteers must undergo induction training, which includes a safeguarding component.
- It is recommended to schedule refresher training for safeguarding at least once a year

Event planning

- When planning events, activities, and competitions, it is essential for your organisation to adhere to safeguarding responsibilities for the safety and well-being of all participants, including young people, volunteers, and officials.
- It is crucial to take necessary steps to promote their overall well-being and safety during the event.

Formalise a system for reporting concerns

- Whenever there are allegations or suspicions of abuse, bullying behaviour, or poor practice, responding and reporting them according to your organisation's reporting procedures is essential.
- Reporting mechanisms or channels available to everyone may include:
 - A safeguarding process with proper reporting systems,
 - A whistle-blower system,
 - Use of an anonymous web-based form,
 - An in-person visit to the designated Safeguarding officer or lead,
 - Using the designated electronic hotline,
 - Feedback and complaints mechanism.

Other measures

- A social media and photography policy.
- Guidance on transportation.
- Guidance on the handover of children.
- Guidance on teaching one-on-one sport



SAFEGUARDING HELP AND ADVICE

HOW SPORT FOR ALL ORGANISATIONS CAN MAKE PARTICIPATION IN SPORT A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL.



ANTI-BULLYING, ABUSE & HARASSMENT

Every participant has the right to experience sport in a safe environment, free from abuse and harassment.



SUPPORTIVE COACHING

Coaches and athletes/participants should have safe interactions promoting mental health and well-being.



SAFEGUARDING MEASURES

You are ensuring the safety of your sport by implementing necessary precautions to prevent potential risks.



MAKING SPORT ACCESSIBLE

Comprehend how and why vulnerable communities are susceptible to abuse and harassment and identify effective measures that can be taken to alleviate these issues.



ATHLETES' RIGHTS

Athletes should be safe and protected from abuse, violence and neglect.



HONESTY, OPENNESS, RESPECT

Sport for All organisations to promote respect for all individuals and establish clear and transparent systems that prioritise openness, honesty and integrity.



CREATING A SAFEGUARDING CULTURE

IN YOUR ORGANISATION

Guide for Coaches and Officials

- People who work or volunteer for Sport for All events and organisations, whether at the grassroots, professional, or school level, are in a position of trust. They are responsible for ensuring all participants' safety, health and well-being and maintaining a secure and safe environment for sports and physical activities.
- Sports leaders must be aware of their legal responsibilities in their positions of authority.
- Coaches are responsible for guaranteeing that all equipment is suitable and secure for its intended purpose. It should also be appropriate for the age group using it. People should receive a complete introduction to all equipment and understand how to use it safely.
- When running sport sessions, coaches must also ensure that children are matched appropriately in size and ability.
- Coaches and officials must recognise that their personal and professional conduct can potentially damage the reputation of the safeguarding programme.



- They should treat all participants with dignity and respect when reporting their issues.
- Coaches and officials mustn't engage in, condone, or tolerate any form of harassment, intimidation, abuse, or exploitation in sports. Additionally, they should not support any illegal conduct that could damage the sport's reputation.
- Coaches and officials must challenge inappropriate conduct directly and responsibly. In addition, report all concerns to safeguard officers.
- Coaches and officials should understand that making intentionally false or misleading allegations against athletes, sports officers, and their colleagues is severe and goes against safeguarding principles.



CREATING A SAFEGUARDING CULTURE

IN YOUR ORGANISATION

Guide for Athletes and Participants



01

STOP ABUSE

Take all signs of abuse seriously and report them, however small.



02

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Be involved in decision-making that directly affects you, and act responsibly. Your voice contributes to playing sports in a safe environment.



03

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Ensure potential obstacles to participation are overcome, be inclusive and acknowledge and appreciate differences between you and other athletes.

04

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Follow some self-care advice and maintain positive mental health; promote the details of mental health support services and make them available to young people.

05

REPORTING NON-RECENT ABUSE

You can still report non-recent abuse, and sports organisations should respond to it.

06

WHISTLEBLOWING

Have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they're unhappy with anything- raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within their sport organisation.



RESOURCES

SAFEGUARDING IN SPORT

- *Safeguarding Athletes from Harassment and Abuse*. International Olympic Committee.
<https://olympics.com/athlete365/courses/safeguarding/>
- *Safe Sport Directory*. International Olympic Committee.
<https://olympics.com/athlete365/safe-sport/safe-sport-directory/>
- *Tackling violence against women and girls in sport: a handbook for policy makers and sports practitioners*. UNESCO.
<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386159>
- *What is consent?*. International Olympic Committee.
<https://olympics.com/athlete365/safe-sport/safe-sport-directory/>
- *i-Project-Individual Training*. i-Project.
<https://learning.safesportinternational.com/i-protect/individual-route/>
- *Safeguarding Principles*. Safe Sport International.
<https://www.safesportinternational.com/principles/>
- *What Are the International Safeguards for Children in Sport?*. International Safeguards for Children in Sport.
<https://safeinsport.org/resources/#eight-safeguards>



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