

## Appendix 7 – Safeguarding Guidance

### Supervision, Ratios and Environment

There **must always be at least 2 adults present for all organised activities**. This will help to ensure the safety of the children as well as protecting adults. They should not be over familiar with children and must remember that they are in a position of trust at all times. Ideally there should be at least one adult of each gender with mixed parties.

#### **Adult / Child Ratios:**

- Adult/child ratios are 1:8 for under 12 years of age and 1:10 for over 12 years of age. For away trips the ratio is 1:5.  
The following factors will be taken into consideration when deciding how many adults are required to safely supervise children: -
  - the nature of the activity
  - the number of children involved in the activity.
  - if there are any hazards associated with the activity or environment
  - the age of the participants
  - whether any of the children have any special needs, disability or challenging behaviour
  - whether any of the volunteers are under the age of 18 – while some volunteers may be U18, they should not be placed in a position of sole responsibility but should be supervised by a more senior coach or volunteer who has been vetted.

#### **Environment:**

- Away trips will need higher rates of supervision. Parents will receive full information about arrangement for such trips and will be required to provide their consent for their child's participation.
- Avoid adults being left alone with young participants, if a leader needs to talk separately to a participant this should be done in an open environment, in view of others.
- Respect the privacy of young people while changing, leaders may only need to enter changing rooms where the participants are very young or require special assistance.
- When necessary, leaders should supervise in pairs or seek assistance, it is the safety and welfare of the participants that is of paramount importance.
- Leaders should not be left alone with young people at the end of a training session. Clearly state times for start and finish of training and/or competitions.
- If late collections occur leaders should remain in pairs until participants have left.
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for collection of young people, it should be made clear that supervision will only be provided for Hockey Ireland activities.
- If a child suffers an injury or accident the parents/ guardians should be informed.
- Keep attendance records and records of any incidents / injuries that arise
- Facilitate parents who wish to stay and supervise sessions, (for safety and supervision, not necessarily for their 'technical' expertise)

### Away Trips/Overnight Stays

Prior to each trip, Hockey Ireland will nominate a staff member/volunteer to be the designated Children's Officer to act as the main contact for dealing with concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children whilst away from home.

Parents should be informed of the CO contact details should there be any concerns.

- Separate permission forms will be signed by parents and participants, containing emergency contact number and any other relevant information.
- Young participants should sign a Code of Conduct agreement
- A meeting with parents and participants should be arranged to communicate travel times, competition details, other activities, gear requirements, medical requirements, special dietary needs and any other necessary details
- Rooming arrangements – adults should not share rooms with juniors. Juniors should share rooms with those of same age and gender and adults should knock before entering rooms
- All group socialisation should take place in communal areas (i.e. no boys in girls' rooms and vice versa)
- Alcohol, smoking or any illegal substances are not permitted to players
- There must be at least one adult of each gender with a mixed party, there should be a good adult – child ratio, 1:5
- Lights out times should be enforced.
- Young people should be under reasonable supervision at all times and should never leave the venue or go unsupervised without prior permission

### Transport and Travel

Staff/volunteers should be discouraged from transporting children to/from activities. However, when this situation cannot be avoided the following guidelines should be followed:

- Request parent/guardian consent in advance and provide details of the journey e.g. who will be transporting their child, why and how long the journey will take.
- Attempt to have more than one child in the car.
- Alternate drivers if possible and which child is dropped off last or drop off at a central location such as the hockey club car park
- Driver should have a point of contact/mobile phone.
- A person other than the planned driver should talk to the child about transport arrangements to check they are comfortable about the plans.
- The driver must ensure that they have insurance to carry others and where necessary the use of booster seats
- Drivers representing and volunteering on behalf of Hockey Ireland should be vetted through National Vetting Bureau/Access NI if driving regularly, and therefore meeting the regulated activity criteria.
- Parents and coaches can also download Sport Irelands SafeSport App <https://www.sportireland.ie/ethics/safesport-app> One of the features of the App is a 'Travel Tracker' function. This allows parents and coaches who are driving someone else's child/children home, for example after a training session, to permit the child's parent or guardian to view and have oversight of their location for a specified period of time while they are travelling on a journey.

### **The use of booster seats**

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

For more information visit;

Republic of Ireland: <https://www.rsa.ie/road-safety/road-users/passengers/children/child-seats> Northern Ireland:

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



### **Personal arrangements between parents**

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

### **Photography**

#### **Permission to take images**

Permission will be sought by Hockey Ireland to ensure that young people and parents/carers are aware of when and how their images may be used. Permission will be obtained through:

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

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

#### **Taking images in certain environments**

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

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

- Changing rooms.
- Open changing areas such as 'villages'
- individual changing/private cubicles provided for personal use.
- Toilets.
- Medical/physio treatment rooms.

#### **Types of appropriate images**

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

- Posed images such as during medal ceremonies, presentations or team shots where young people must be wearing t-shirt and shorts/skirts/skorts/trousers.
- Action shots of young people where the focus is on their participation in hockey, not the athlete.
- Images of children should not be taken where the pose is inappropriate e.g. open legs; bending over from behind, etc.

#### **Safe use of images**

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



### **Types of images and appropriate use:**

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

### **Use of images on social media**

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

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

### **Storage of Images**

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

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

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

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

### **Taking inappropriate images**

If there is any concern about the nature of any image taken this should be reported to the NCO/DLP in Hockey Ireland who will refer to the statutory authorities. The concerned individual may also report their concern directly to the statutory authorities. The contact details for the statutory authority can be found in Hockey Ireland's Safeguarding Policy.



## **Non-authorised taking of images**

If you are concerned about an individual taking images at an event this should be verbally reported to the Hockey Ireland representative at the event. It may be necessary to report the non- authorised taking of images to the appropriate statutory authorities.

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

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

## **Inappropriate use of images**

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

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

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

## **Social Media**

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

**All communication with children should be open, transparent and appropriate and should take place via parent/guardian.**

## **For Leaders Using a Social Networking Site**

- Where possible all communication with children should take place via parents/guardian. Before leaders communicate directly with young people via social networking sites, or by any other means of internet communications (e.g. email) consent must be sought from the parent/guardian and young person.
- Parental and child's permission is required before pictures of videos of children or young people are posted online.
- Leaders should not 'friend' or 'follow' children or young people on social media. (Children or young people may 'follow' leaders on social media so leaders should make sure any content they post is appropriate.)
- Messages left to or from children or young people on social network sites should be written on an open page (e.g. A Facebook 'Wall') and not in a private message or by using 'chat' [one-on-one].
- Leaders should not network with members of their organisation/group via closed [one-on-one] chats e.g. Facebook messenger, WhatsApp, etc. This should be done only through 'Group Chat.'
- Any events or activities run by Hockey Ireland that are organised or publicised on the site should be a closed event so as non-members cannot access the event without suitable permission by the site administrators.
- Any emails sent to children or young people via the site must be sent to at least one other leader. (This can be done by 'bcc' if necessary.)
- Leaders should avoid communicating with children or young people in their organisation/group via email late at night.



- In signing off a post or email leaders should not do so in a way that could be misconstrued or misinterpreted by the recipient, e.g. "Luv X"; "xoxoxo". Simply sign your name.
- Any allegations of abuses reported through a social networking site will be dealt with according to our reporting procedures.

### **Mobile Phones**

Young people value their mobile phones as it gives them a sense of independence and they can often be given to young people for security to enable parents to keep in touch. However, technology has given direct personal contact between adults and young people and in some cases, adults have used this to cross personal boundaries placing themselves and young people at risk. Where possible all communication to young people should be through their parent/guardian's mobile number or email address. Parental and young person's permission must be sought if the leader will be contacting children or young people directly. Leaders involved in hockey should only have children's and young people's mobile numbers if the nature of their involvement requires them to phone or text them.

#### **As a Leader**

- Use group texts for communication among players and teams and inform parents of this at the start of the season, tournament or event.
- It is not appropriate or acceptable to have constant contact with an individual athlete.
- Don't use your phone in inappropriate locations, such as changing rooms, especially if your phone has a camera.
- Do not send messages late at night
- Remember the principles of the Leaders Code of Conduct apply to social media communication as well and consider your digital footprint before posting.
- If it turns into a conversation, communications should be ended. A leader can suggest discussing the subject further at the next event or, if they are concerned about the child/ young person, arrange to meet up to talk further (within the usual safeguarding parameters).

#### **As an underage hockey player:**

- If you receive an offensive message, email or photo don't reply to it, save it, make note of times and dates and tell a parent, children's officer or responsible adult you trust.
- Be careful about whom you give your number or email address to and don't respond to unfamiliar numbers.
- Don't use your phone in inappropriate locations, such as changing rooms, especially if your phone has a camera.
- Treat your phone as you would any valuable item so that you can guard against theft.

### **Smart Phones**

Smart phones should be used safely and responsibly.

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

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

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity the leader in charge should ensure they are clear about expectations of them in relation to safeguarding. Professional photographers/film/video



operators wishing to record an activity should seek accreditation from leaders by producing their professional identification for the details to be recorded. The leader should then:

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

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

- Children/young people can only be photographed when permission has been provided in writing from their parent/guardian and child.
- The scope of the use of photographs must also be stated as part of the parental permission.
- Children/young people should not be named individually in photographs unless necessary and with clear agreement and consent of parents and child, for example, if the child/young concerned was winning a prize worthy of publication.
- When posting photographs on social media settings should be such that children/young people cannot be individually tagged.
- All photographs must be stored in a secure place either electronically in a password protected file or physically in a locked cabinet.
- If any electronic device/memory which contains photographs is disposed of or passed on, then the device must be wiped of all photographs in such a way that they cannot be recovered on that device.

### **Physical Contact**

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

### **When is physical contact appropriate in hockey?**

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

- Develop hockey skills or techniques.
- Treat an injury.
- Prevent an injury or accident from occurring.
- Comfort a distressed child or to celebrate their success.

### **Good principles to follow:-**

- Physical contact should take place in the interests of and for the benefit of the child, rather than the adult involved. This is the basic principle that all other decisions around physical contact are based on.
- Adults should explain the nature of and reason for the physical contact to the child.



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

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

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

- Efforts should be made to receive as much information as possible on the child to ensure safe inclusion of him/her. There should be clear agreements on what is required.
- Parents/carers should be asked to undertake all intimate or personal care tasks for their child. This is not an appropriate role for coaches and others involved in leading activities.
- When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, they should be treated with dignity and respect.
- Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting.
- Leaders/volunteers should not take responsibility for tasks for which they are not appropriately trained.

### **Is it ok to comfort a child or celebrate success?**

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



### **Late Collection**

- Parents/guardians should be made aware of the start and finish times and the arrangements for drop off/collection are understood by everyone.
- Parents/guardians who wish to allow their children to go home unaccompanied should give consent in writing to do so. The activity leader still has a responsibility to consider under their duty to care if this is a reasonable safe decision made by the natural parent.
- If a parent is late to collect a child, the wellbeing of the child will take precedence and they must not be left alone.
- Contact the parent using the emergency contact number. If there is no answer, ask the junior if there is another family member to contact.
- Wait with the junior at the club or venue, preferably with other staff or volunteers.

### **Accidents and Incidents and First Aid**

Parental consent forms will be obtained for all juniors who are participating in events or activities, or attending coaching organised by Hockey Ireland. This ensures staff/volunteers running the event are made aware of any medical conditions/medicines being taken by the participant or any existing injuries. These forms will be treated in confidence and only shared with those who require the information to perform their role effectively. A well-resourced first aid kit should be available at the venue.

In the event of a child requiring medical attention

- Parent/guardian will be contacted immediately
- In the event of failure to contact parent/guardian, the alternative emergency contact will be used.
- The consent form will be consulted to establish whether parents have given their consent for the Hockey Ireland representative to accompany the child to seek medical attention
- Only those with a current recognised First Aid Qualification should treat injuries
- A record of the action taken will be made and retained by Hockey Ireland

### **Safety**

Hockey Ireland will endeavour to:

- Ensure activities are suitable for age and stage of development of participants
- Keep a record of any specific medical conditions of the participants
- Keep a record of emergency contact numbers for parents / guardians
- Ensure any necessary protective gear is used
- Ensure First Aid kit is available with access to a qualified first-aider
- Know the contact numbers of emergency services
- Keep first aid kit appropriately stocked for Hockey Ireland events
- Ensure easy access to medical personnel if needed and have an emergency plan
- If an incident occurs, make a brief record of injury and action taken. Make a brief record of the problem/action/outcome. Contact the participant's parents and keep them informed of all details
- Officials (convenors and referees, etc.) should ensure the conduct of the game
- Participants should know and keep the etiquette guidelines of hockey, keeping in mind that many rules are there for safety
- Ensure Leaders are trained and hold appropriate qualifications required for their position
- Ensure there is adequate insurance cover for all activities
- Ensure parents / guardians know they need to be present at finishing time of sessions or event.



## **Anti- Bullying Policy and Guidance**

### **What is Bullying Behaviour**

Bullying behaviour can be defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

### **Types of Bullying Behaviour**

Bullying behaviour exists in many different forms, some are not as obvious as others, but are just as damaging to the victim. Listed below are some of the more common types of bullying, one or more method may be used by the person displaying bullying behaviour.

#### **Physical**

Physical bullying includes any physical contact that would hurt or injure a person like pushing, hitting, kicking, punching, tripping, etc. Physical bullying can put the person experiencing bullying behaviour at risk of injury and makes them feel powerless. Taking something that belongs to someone else and destroying it would also be considered a type of physical bullying.

#### **Verbal**

Verbal bullying usually takes the form of name-calling or making nasty remarks or jokes about a person's religion, gender, appearance, sexuality, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or the way they look. It can also include freezing the victim out by exclusion or spreading rumours.

#### **Threats**

Making threats against a person or their property is also a type of bullying. It can be a threat to damage or take something belonging to the victim or to hurt them physically. Often the threat is not actually carried out, but the fear created by the threat can be enough to upset the person experiencing bullying behaviour.

#### **Cyber**

Cyber bullying is done by sending messages, pictures, or information using electronic media, computers (email & instant messages), mobile phones (text messaging & voicemail) and social networking websites. This activity can be upsetting and harmful to the person targeted. This type of bullying behaviour can allow the person who is displaying bullying behaviour to hide their identity which may have a bigger impact on the person experiencing bullying behaviour.

#### **Homophobic**

Homophobic bullying is motivated by prejudice against a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity- lesbians, gay males, bisexual, transsexual, or transgender people.

#### **Racist**

Racist bullying is motivated by prejudice against a person's skin colour, cultural or religious background or ethnic origin.

### **The Impact of Bullying Behaviour**

The damage inflicted by bullying behaviour can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to juniors, to the extent that it affects their health and development, or at the extreme, cause them significant harm. Even for those not directly targeted, bullying behaviour can have a negative effect on how safe they feel, concerned all the time that they could be next or feeling guilty for not being able to help a friend.

## Recognising Bullying Behaviour

There are a number of signs that may indicate a person is being bullied:

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities
- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings)
- Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven)
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of, money with vague explanations
- Having few friends or drop out of newer members
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed, not eating, reduced concentration, drop in performance)
- Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics)

*This list is not exhaustive and there are other possible reasons for many of the above. The presence of one or more of these indicators is not proof that bullying is actually taking place*

## How to prevent Bullying Behaviour

- Ensure that all members follow the Code of Conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member
- Deal with any incidents as soon as they arise
- Use a whole group policy or ‘no-blame approach’, i.e. working with person (s) displaying the bullying behavior and the group of juniors, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing, and so make the problem a ‘shared concern’ of the group
- Encourage juniors to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or children with specific needs
- Offer the person experiencing bullying behavior immediate support and put the ‘no blame approach’ into operation
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can’t ignore it, it hurts too much
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the person (s) displaying the bullying behavior at his/her own game.
- Reassure the person experiencing bullying behavior that they have done nothing wrong. Reinforce that there is a ‘right to tell’ culture within the club.

## Who should deal with bullying?

While the more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse and are reported to the Statutory Authorities, dealing with bullying behaviour is normally the responsibility of all Leaders within hockey. You should also liaise with the appropriate National Children’s Officer & DLP.

## Using the NO BLAME Approach

The **NO BLAME** approach seeks to find a resolution for the young people involved in the bullying behaviour whilst maintaining their relationship within the club or the group.

This is important for young people who often simply want the behaviour to stop, without a need for punishments to be imposed.

The **NO BLAME** approach encourages young people to recognise the impact of their behaviour and then to take responsibility for changing it. By using this approach, a previous relationship between or within a team can often be re-established; this is often a preferred option for the young people involved.

## The ethos behind the NO BLAME approach is to:

EXPLAIN the problem, i.e. that someone seems to be unhappy in the club, seems to be picked on etc. and explain how that person is feeling; this should not accuse anyone.

ASK for ideas as to how to help this person



LEAVE the individuals involved to check how the behaviour has changed

SHARE the responsibility of changing the behaviour and encouraging everyone to speak to a trusted adult if there is bullying behaviour in the club

*The NO BLAME approach does not attempt to get 'confessions', it seeks to get an acknowledgement of behaviour and provides an opportunity for young people to change hurtful behaviour.*

There may be issues that are not resolved through the NO BLAME approach, where behaviour continues. Bullying behaviour is a breach of a code of conduct and may have to be dealt with through a disciplinary process. However, the outcome for young people is far better when issues can be resolved through the NO BLAME approach.

## **NO BLAME APPROACH**

### **STEP 1: MEET WITH THE JUNIOR WHO IS THE TARGET OF THE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

If you find that there has been an incident of bullying behaviour, first talk to the young person who is the target of the behaviour. At this stage find out who was involved and what the young person is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:

- What was the behaviour that has caused upset?
- How are you feeling to check if they are emotionally/physically hurt?
- Who was involved in the behaviour, i.e. was it in your own peer group?
- When and where did it happen?
- Make sure you actively listen and advise the young person of the next steps that will be taken, but important also to ask what they want done.

### **STEP 2: MEET WITH ALL INVOLVED**

Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include those who initiated the bullying behaviour, some of the backup and if necessary you might want to ask the audience

The meeting should be informal, and it is much better to try to meet the individuals before meeting as a group. If you meet with a group keep the number controllable and you should only deal with the topic of concern i.e. the culture of cooperation required within the club for everyone to enjoy their time. Make sure everyone knows you are there to get their point of view and find their solutions.

### **STEP 3: EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM**

Talk about the hurt caused in general terms without apportioning blame, e.g. you might suggest the target of the bullying behaviour doesn't seem to be happy in the club (if they are comfortable with this approach), and you have heard they have been called names/left out/picked on etc. It might be helpful to ask questions like:

- What do you think they are feeling?
- How would you feel if it was you?
- What would you do if it happened to you?
- What could we do to see it does not happen again?

You should not use specific details of the incident or allocate blame, however explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, being rejected, laughed at and how that the person may be feeling.

Listen and watch out for reactions and pick up on comments without accusing or if in a group without isolating anyone; this is an opportunity to find out how others in the group feel about bullying behaviour.



#### **STEP 4: ASK THE GROUP/INDIVIDUAL FOR THEIR IDEAS**

At this stage the group or individual is encouraged to suggest ways that would make a target of the bullying behaviour feel happier. Use phrases like: “if it were you what would help you....”, to encourage a response.

Listen to all suggestions and note them, especially positive responses as these will help create an environment for young people involved to work together.

#### **STEP 5: LEAVE IT TO THE GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL**

Now the problem has been identified and solutions suggest it is now handed over to the group/individual to act on. Arrange what actions they will take and to meet again a certain time frame. You have now passed the responsibility over to the group or the individual to take the suggested action within that time. Please ensure the person who directly experienced the bullying behaviour is happy with this and the level of supervision put in place to monitor any other risks.

#### **STEP 6: MEET THEM AGAIN**

Meet everyone, including the person who had been the ring leader for the bullying behaviour and the target of the behaviour; discuss how things are going and check if there have been other incidents.

This allows for continual monitoring and keeps everyone involved in the process. The

parents of the young people involved should be informed of the actions taken. **STEP 7:**

#### **SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY**

Meet with the wider group or team to discuss what should be in place to help prevent further incidents and what impact bullying behaviour may have on everyone, e.g. less free time or social activities, or other actions might need to be imposed as a preventative measure.

Any action should be used in the spirit of prevention, not as a punishment.

#### **Useful Contacts**

Childline ROI Tel: 1800 66 66 66 or Text Talk to 50101 [www.childline.ie](http://www.childline.ie)

<https://tacklebullying.ie/information-hub/>

Childline UK Tel: 0800 1111 [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) [www.endbullying.org.uk](http://www.endbullying.org.uk) [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk) [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

CPSU Anti-Bullying activities for sports clubs: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/tools/anti-bullying-activities/>



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